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VENTURES IN BELIEF

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CHRISTIAN CONVICTIONS FOR A DAY OF UNCERTAINTY

REINHOLD NIEBUHR
FRANCIS J. McCONNELL
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PREFACE

THE essays in this small volume are an attempt to state the major convictions of the Christian mind, clearly, briefly and as they may be held by young men and women alert to every breath of modern thought. The thread which unites them is woven of at least two strands. They have been written with a common purpose and with a common audience in view—the young minds of our land as they are represented typically in the universities and colleges. And the authors share common presuppositions, a common approach to problems of Christian belief. Although there has been little consultation among them, it is doubtful whether any of the writers would wish to take serious exception to the views of his collaborators. Thus the contributions may be regarded as springing, on the whole, from a single point of view.

The symposium method, while sacrificing something in unity of thought, has been employed because of its obvious advantages. Each writer has

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been invited to participate because of the particular contribution he has to make on the subject assigned. The contributors have been encouraged to the utmost liberty in the development of their several topics and, as far as is natural for them, to the use of personal statement in presentation.

These papers have been collected and are issued under the auspices of the Student Christian Association Movement of America. While originally prepared with youth, especially the youth of the colleges, in mind, it is believed that they may prove none the less helpful to those of an older generation. For the religious perplexities of youth are, typically, the problems of all thoughtful men and women of our day, but perhaps more clearly and critically expressed.

A number of the chapters have already appeared in *The Intercollegian*, the magazine of the Student Christian Movement.

New York,
May, 1930.

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INTRODUCTION

CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE MODERN WORLD

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

"Reinhold Niebuhr—in whose words and writings the younger generation has achieved an almost disconcerting sincerity, and a penetrating power of analysis which searches the conscience and refuses the comfort of even the most delicate and gracious self-deception."

With these words one of our foremost preachers pays tribute to the man who seems in the way to become the acknowledged spokesman of the highest idealism of the younger generation. Few who know him would question the accuracy of the description. Three things are most characteristic of Reinhold Niebuhr—an analytic mind which pierces, rapier-like, to the core of complex issues; a social conscience which mercilessly lays bare the unrealities of modern life, but without a touch of personal animus; profound understanding of the deeper ranges of inner experience where personal religion most characteristically takes its rise. In his message, as in that of no other Christian spokesman, personal and social emphases are inextricably interwoven; it is because they are one fabric in his own experience. He himself is proof that the Christian gospel is one, but with implications for every aspect of man's life.

Officially, he is Professor of Applied Christianity in Union Theological Seminary, New York, editor of *The World Tomorrow,* and a contributing editor of *The Christian Century.* But every weekend finds him in the colleges somewhere between the Atlantic and Chicago as university preacher or conference leader. Of his generation, he is beyond question the most sought after and most influential speaker to students.

The temper of his mind and the basic positions of his philosophy may be readily caught from his *Does Civilization Need Religion?* But if you would know the man, you must turn to his *Leaves from the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic*—one of the most arresting spiritual autobiographies of our time. In it are revealed the tragic futilities of modern life, the harassing dilemmas of the Christian ministry in such an age, and—the sensitive spirit of Reinhold Niebuhr. It is the startlingly candid self-revelation of one who, as has been pointed out, is neither "tamed" nor a "cynic."

Professor Niebuhr was born in Wright County, Missouri, June 21, 1892, the son of a minister of the Evangelical denomination. His ancestry is German. His early education was in the college and seminary of his church. In 1913 he went on to Yale University and completed work for the degrees of B.D. and M.A. Immediately after ordination, he took hold of the Bethel Evangelical Church in Detroit, then a tiny struggling congregation, and in a ministry of thirteen years built it up into one of the most liberal and prophetic churches of the Middle West. In 1928 he was called to an associate professorship in Union Seminary; two years later he was elected to the chair of Applied Christianity. In addition to his teaching and editorial responsibilities, Professor Niebuhr for many years has represented his denomination in the Federal Council of Churches. He is an influential member of the Council's Administrative Committee and now chairman of its Department of Social Service. He holds the degree of D.D. from Eden Theological Seminary.

CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE MODERN WORLD

BY REINHOLD NIEBUHR

THE difficulties which religion faces in the modern world are not due alone to the phenomenal advance of modern science. It is true that religious world views are associated too intimately with discredited cosmologies and it is not always easy to convince either believer or unbeliever that religion is not identical with and need not share the fate of prescientific world views. It is also true that a scientific spirit, proud of its recent victories, tends to be inhospitable to life-expressions which are incompatible with its genius and which use poetic rather than scientific symbols of truth. But religion is more than an affirmation about the character of life and the universe; and its conflict with the thought forms of the modern day is therefore not its only difficulty. It is a way of feeling about life and a way of living; and both religious feeling and religious living are imperilled in the modern world on other grounds than those supplied by the scientific temper.

Religious feeling develops in man's reaction to two mysteries, the mystery of the world and the mystery of self. Religion is not only reaction to mystery but it is that at least. Primitive man stands in awe of the immensities of nature and combines with his reverence a sense of dependence upon the vast forces of the world which impinge upon his life, defy his control, and yet frequently determine his destiny. While some primitive religion represents a crude attempt to bend these forces to man's will and need, religion in its higher reaches expresses gratitude for and dependence upon the universal forces which affect him beneficently. Modern science has not abolished mystery nor changed the fact of man's dependence. But a modern urban civilization has produced a type of person who is divorced from nature and lives under the illusion that he is the master of his fate, except as he recognizes his dependence upon his fellows. It might be observed that the self-assurance of modern man is collective rather than personal. Not as an individual but as a unit in a collective whole he has built a great civilization which, at least from the perspective of its urban centers, is independent of

the caprices of nature and unconscious of the place in life of what profound souls in other ages have called "grace." As an individual your modern man suffers not so much from any undue feeling of self-sufficiency as from a sense of futility. That is why he immerses himself in crowds whenever possible. Modern irreligion is therefore due to a degree not to the rationalistic spirit but to the urban spirit. The great city dwarfs the individual, obscures the mysteries of the universe and leaves only a mechanical collectivity comprised of unimaginative and mechanical individuals.

Naturally, the mystery of the world concerns man only or chiefly as it relates itself to the mystery of selfhood. Men discovered the world before they discovered themselves but they explained the world in terms of the phenomena of conscious life even before they discovered themselves. It is man's self-awareness which is the real root of his religion. While he deified some force of nature before he deified some aspect of human life, even the natural force assumed aspects of consciousness. The fact that man is dwarfed by physical immensity and yet feels himself superior to it, because in his conscious

life he comprehends it, fates him to be religious to the end of his days. While a mechanistic psychology may seem to reduce the significance of self-conscious reason, it is itself the symptom rather than the cause of this denial of the significance of personality. The real cause lies in mechanical collectivism and in the distractions which the hectic character of modern industrial civilization creates. When man is immersed in a mass of humanity with but a minimum opportunity of expressing himself in relation to it, he loses his capacity for self-realization. The distractions of a hectic life, both in work and in play, make the kind of meditations which cultivate the religious feeling difficult. Religious meditation ends in God but it begins with the discovery of self. The great mystics have all borne testimony to the fact that the way to discovery of God is through sounding the depths of selfhood. When through quiet and meditation the multifarious impulses of conscious life are brought under the control of the self's central purpose and organizing center it follows inevitably that the world itself is finally understood and explained in terms of a unifying purpose. This may be an over-belief,

from the standpoint of a purely analytic approach to the known facts of the world. But it is an inevitable way of feeling about life for all men who feel the problem of the self in its relation to the world profoundly. The genius of religion is to unite, as Kant did, the mystery of the starry heavens above to the mystery of the moral law within. However man may bring these mysteries together in some kind of creedal scheme the important fact here is that vital souls who are sensitive to both mysteries will have a religious feeling about life. If many modern souls do not have it, their loss is partly due to the scientific spirit and the intellectual preoccupation of the age with all the multifarious details of the inner and the outer world, in which the underlying unities, with their suggestion of meaning and purpose, are easily obscured and not readily discovered. But the scientific spirit would not alone rob men of the sense of inner and outer unity if their way of life, the hectic character of their daily program, did not rob them of the inclination and the opportunity to think profoundly about the issues of life.

Religious feeling emerges not only from solitary

meditation but from a way of living with other people. The religious life is bound up with the social life. Man's religious sense of worth cannot maintain itself except he develop in association with his fellows a way of life in which his own life is lifted above impulse and interest and the life of his fellowman is recognized as having equal value with his own. Religion is a sublimation of vital energy but it is also a discipline of that energy in the interest of social harmony. Primitive life was not ethically more perfect than modern life, but men were not conscious of their social relationships except in their more intimate groups, where a measure of ethical integrity reinforced the religious conception of life. In modern life larger and larger groups establish a measure of cooperation but individuals are related to these groups mechanically rather than spiritually and the impersonal and unethical character of social relationships tend to rob men of their self-respect and of respect for each other. If religion cannot be made vital enough to influence human relationships so that love will replace fear and contempt, social life cannot be purified so that it may strengthen religious feeling. It

is because man has become a victim of his machine civilization that he has grown secular in his feeling about life; and from this state he can be rescued only by an ethical life robust and adventurous enough to conquer the mechanism of modern life in the interest of human values. But for such an adventure only a strong religious impulse can prompt him. So religion waits upon social adventure and social adventure waits upon religion.

Inevitably a vital religion must express itself in a world-view and must articulate its feelings in a scheme of truth. It is an error to assume that the problems of religion in modern life are chiefly matters of belief. A vital religion will always find a way of articulating its feelings in ideas and of making those ideas relevant to contemporary knowledge. Nevertheless, the problems of belief are real. It is not easy to give an account of what the religious man feels to be true about life in terms acceptable to an age which is enamored of the mechanisms of the inner and the outer world. Perhaps the best method of procedure is to reduce religious faith to minimum terms, even though we realize that to reduce religious affirma-

tions to minimum terms and to strip them of the rich imagery of historical faith is conceding too much of their poetic power to the needs of science. It is because there are limits to such a procedure that it is better to remain on the basis of an historical faith and tradition when we express faith in terms of reason, than to leave the basis of historical faith altogether and attempt a philosophical theology completely emancipated from any particular religion. For most of us Christianity is our religion. It is our fate. Our moral and religious regeneration must be worked out in terms of its historic affirmations.

Reduced to irreducible proportions the Christian faith is expressed in two great affirmations: that love is the ultimate principle of human relationships; and that the high worth of human personality which justifies the principle of love is in turn justified and supported by the character of reality itself. The Christian believes, in other words, that human character, whatever its lowly beginnings and obvious limitations, is potentially capable of moral integrity and on the whole will achieve its highest development by the inspiration of a faith

and trust which has its eyes on the potentialities rather than the imperfect realities. The Christian believes, moreover, that this faith in personality is justified by the character of the universe itself, which, whatever its indifference to personal values in the immediate instant, is animated by a concern for the values it has created in human history.

It is not easy to hold to either one of these articles of the Christian credo. In the scientific knowledge which belongs to the accepted tenets of a modern mind there are facts which seriously circumscribe the idea of freedom in both man and the universe. Man is less of a self-directing force (and therefore less of a trustworthy personality) than he had believed; and the universe is less obviously under the dominion of a central purpose than the Christian faith assumes. The psychological and social sciences have traced man's dependence upon chance and circumstance into the farthest complexities of social life and the most intricate depths of his inner life. Men are, to a large extent, the tools of chance and the victims of circumstance and much of what they have called freedom has been an illusion.

Though this is true there is no good reason for accepting the extreme position of the mechanists. Professor Freienfels, in his stimulating book, *The Mysteries of the Soul,* suggests that behaviorism is a natural overstatement of facts to be understood in the light of the intellectual climate of a civilization which has mechanized life, to such a degree that a mechanistic interpretation of personality is in fact a true description of the kind of personality this kind of civilization tends to produce. Here we have an emphasis which in all probability will go down as the aberration of an obfuscated generation rather than a permanent insight of the race. Certainly no science can successfully deny the fact of human consciousness. Man is conscious of himself and of the world in which he lives as no other organism is. And in that consciousness lie the possibilities of endless adjustment to new and higher areas of reality. What he knows and what he wills may be colored by the environment which envelops him; but his reactions always contain a measure of uniqueness and defy the measurements and tabulations of determinists. Perhaps a day will soon come when social scientists

will be less anxious to aspire to the kind of infallibility to which the physical scientists lay claim and will therefore be more ready to concede what history proves and what makes precision in every social science impossible: the endless variety and uniqueness of the reaction of man to his environment.

Except we concede everything to the extreme mechanists there are tremendous ethical possibilities in modern social science. The greatest possibility of prompting men to ethical conduct lies in revealing to them the non-moral and determined character of most of their actions. It is when they realize how frequently they use their reason, not to choose the highest good, but to justify some gratification of immediate desire and some concession to lesser values, that they will emancipate their reason for higher choices. The Christian religion has always insisted that repentance is the basis of the good life, and that emphasis is justified in terms of modern psychology. If the knowledge of the limitations of human freedom will not operate to obsess sensitive souls with the difficulty of the moral struggle, it may easily become the very foundation of an ethical regeneration of modern society.

In accepting the Christian principle of love much depends upon practical adventure in human relations. Constant analysis of psychological and economic factors involved in the organization of human personality may easily tempt the observer to minimize the real potentialities of human life, while actual adventure in human relations will, in spite of many disappointments, justify the principle of love and reveal its potency in history. One reason why a purely scientific attitude in human relations is never adequate is that we are dealing at this point more than at any other with a world in the making; and what is made of it depends to some degree on what hopes we have for it.

The second article in the Christian credo, that the personal values which we exalt in our conduct have some cosmic validity and that the principle of love is basic to the whole structure of reality, is in many respects more difficult to maintain than the first. If we are willing to reduce the idea of love to the principle of harmony we will not have much difficulty, of course. The universe is evidently some kind of harmony. Naturally, the

harmony is not complete. There is conflict as well as harmony. Life on certain levels seems to have no concern for life on other levels. Man is nurtured on nature's bosom but he conceives hopes and dreams of which nature knows nothing and his most precious values are never safe from the depredations of nature's caprices and elemental passions. Religion in its most irreducible form is the discovery and the appreciation of the harmonies of life and the universe. The Christian religion goes beyond this, however. It assumes and affirms that a loving personal will is the source of the world's harmonies. This is a tremendous assumption which never can be completely justified in purely scientific terms. Modern physics is much more sympathetic to it than Newtonian science because it has destroyed dogmatic determinism and made the idea of freedom intellectually respectable. Naturally, the general temper of science will remain rather inhospitable to the idea of freedom because it is difficult to deal scientifically with a world in which events are not predictable.

While it does make a difference whether or

not the idea of freedom achieves intellectual respectability in modern science, religion can never depend on science to justify its conceptions of a loving personal will. It is hardly illogical to assume that if the universe reveals clues of purposive development there is a mind in relation to this purpose. Such logic would not justify the omnipotent God of unreflective orthodoxy but it would, as Professor Hobhouse suggests, point to a God who gradually brings the various mechanisms, which frustrate a unified purpose, under its dominion. To interpret the unified purpose of the universe in terms gained from human experience is frankly a projection. But it is different in degree rather than in kind from projections which are used in other types of human knowledge. We cannot believe in the self-conscious life of other individuals without projecting knowledge which we have gained in our own life alone.

The religious man does not regard his idea of God as a projection because he brings to its support other methods of certainty. These, as far as they are non-rational, may always hover perilously on the abyss of error and yet be legitimate meth-

ods of arriving at truth. Professor Gilbert Murray says about them: "The fact remains that man must have some relation to the uncharted, the mysterious tracts of life which surround him on every side. For my own part I am content to say that his method must be to a large extent the method of what St. Paul calls faith; that is, some attitude not of the conscious intellect, but of the whole being, using all its powers of sensitiveness, all its feeblest and most inarticulate tentacles and feelers, in an effort to touch what cannot be grasped by the definite senses or analyzed by the conscious intellect. What we gain thus is an insecure but a precious possession. We gain no dogma, at least no secure dogma; but we gain much more. We gain something hard to define which lies at the heart of not only religion but of art and poetry, and all the higher strivings of the human heart."*

In one of its aspects the method of faith of which Professor Murray speaks might be defined as mysticism and intuition. It is the method of intuitively, poetically, mystically viewing the whole

*Gilbert Murray, *Five Stages of Greek Religion.*

of life, of forgetting detailed facts and complexities, until life's total harmonies and purposes impress the soul and bring it into intimate relation with the divine purpose. In another of its aspects this is the method of moral venture where faith is not so much mystical reflection as it is a practical experience. The soul gives itself to the highest values it knows; it makes love so real and potent in life that it becomes certain of its ultimate and cosmic validity.

Jesus was both mystic and moral enthusiast. From the standpoint of pure intellectualism it must be admitted there is a certain naïveté in both attitudes. Perhaps it might be well if this were more freely admitted. Jesus glorified in simplicity and placed a premium upon it. "Except ye be as little children ye cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." The Christian faith could not be maintained if science were completely hostile and were unable to find any aspect of the universe which gave support to the affirmations of faith. But the affirmations of faith originate on the whole in the moral enterprise, are supported by it and gain additional support from the poetic and intuitive approaches

to life. The extreme intellectualist may, if he is generous, call all this "dynamic illusion." But those who are not corrupted by sophistication will continue to believe that life is not so unjust as to be most ruthless with our most precious values. They will believe that though man's highest values transcend the world of nature by such a degree that scepticism is inevitable, yet these values of man's life emerged out of nature and are organically related to the whole of reality, which has in it mysteries which will explain the source and provide for the consummation of man's profoundest and noblest aspirations.

In other words, the Christian religion is founded upon a kind of heroic logic. Its affirmations are really logical but they project hypotheses which are not easily maintained; and which cannot be verified if they are not held in heroic defiance of some immediate evidence to the contrary. That is why theistic faith is the world view of either traditionalists or moral adventurers. The traditionalists maintain their faith because they are not sufficiently active intellectually to recognize its difficulties; the moral adventurers maintain it in

spite of recognized difficulties because they have discovered a logic in life which negates any premature conclusions of purely analytic intelligence.

When life is vital and morally robust it inevitably universalizes its values, in spite of every philosophical and scientific difficulty which such a process faces. The rational justification of faith is therefore secondary. It is necessary when life is both vital and rational; it is unnecessary when life is vital but not too reflective; and it is futile when an age has reached a stage of sophistication in which the spirit of rationality has enervated moral vitality. Religion, in the final analysis, is justified by life, by morally potent and poetically vital life. Reason may support but it can never create the forces which express themselves in true religion.

I

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT GOD

FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

For more than a quarter of a century, Francis J. McConnell's voice has been one of the most respected and influential in the churches of America. In him are almost uniquely united the competent scholar, fearless leader in the practical application of Christian principles, arresting preacher, and able administrator. Among lay philosophers, he stands in the first rank as the interpreter and biographer of the late Borden P. Bowne, founder of the Personalist school of philosophy. As a member of the Interchurch World Movement's Commission on the Steel Strike, chairman for many years of the Social Service Commission of the Federal Council of Churches and arbitrator in several labor disputes, he has been perhaps the foremost American interpreter of the "social gospel." Annually, he visits many of the colleges and universities of the country as college preacher. As President of DePauw University from 1909–1912, since then as Resident Bishop of his own church, the Methodist Episcopal, and the chairman of its Foreign Mission Board, he has for many years carried exceedingly heavy executive responsibilities. In 1929, he was elected President of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America—the highest honor in the gift of the American Church.

Bishop McConnell was born in Ohio in 1871 and received his education at Ohio Wesleyan and Boston Universities. He entered the Methodist ministry in 1894. After four brief pastorates in New England,

he became minister of the New York Avenue Methodist Church in Brooklyn in 1903. Thence he was called to the Presidency of DePauw University. Since May, 1912, he has been a Bishop of the Methodist Church, first in the Pittsburgh and at present in the New York district.

His writing includes important books in each of the major fields of his interest. *The Diviner Immanence, Is God Limited?* and *The Christlike God* face the most difficult intellectual problems of religion in our day; *Christian Focus, Democratic Christianity* and *Human Needs and World Christianity* treat of social and world issues; *The Preacher and the People* and *Public Opinion and Theology* have to do with the problems of the ministry; *Borden Parker Bowne* is the authorized biography of the great teacher by whom his own thought has been so strongly moulded. Of his manner of writing and speaking, it has been well said, "it is rugged and vigorous, at times idiosyncratic and invariably attractive to youth. He has the happy power of challenging attention by his very style of address and of holding it by the originality of his thinking."

MY BELIEF IN GOD

MAY I say at the outset that it requires only a little discernment to see that the greater concerns of life move along on a basis of belief. We do not know much in the sense of scientifically demonstrable knowledge. The strictest knowledge rests down at last upon something, or some things, we take for granted. It would be better if, in our arguments, we could agree beforehand on what we are to take for granted. This game of reasoning suffers from the fact that we do not bring the rules on which we are playing out into the open where we can look at them. Some things we take for granted because we must; some things just because we do—out of logical carelessness, or unrecognized mental habit, or lack of realization of what we are doing.

Among the assumptions we must make I mention three: I take it for granted that in an argument or discussion I am existing in a community of other persons like myself with whom I am communicating. Next, I accept it without argument that there is some common-to-us-all on which

I meet these other persons; if there were no such means of communication, I could not reach them and they could not reach me. Finally, I assume that the human reason in them and in me is trustworthy—or at least trustworthy enough for us to carry on our discussion. The instant I come to a position where I can no longer believe in the reality of persons, or in the common plane of mutual understanding on which persons can meet, or in the trustworthiness of human reason, I shall conclude that I have got off the track somewhere.

Since all thinking moves on assumption, and since the only question about assumptions is as to the number and kind we are making, the fruitful procedure in questions that have to do with human living is not one of doubting everything and of accepting only what can be strictly proved. If we began by doubting everything we could never get started—at least at not more than a snail's pace. Three-score years and ten would not be enough to land us at any goal worth reaching. The more excellent way manifestly is to assume that things around us are telling the truth till reasons for doubt appear in our dealings with particular

things. If all things alike lied to us, all questions would alike become futile. In daily life we assume the good faith of the people we meet; we take them as truthful until we find them lying. Moreover, if we have any large experience of human intercourse, we are slow to assume any considerable lying to us on the part of our fellow men. The room for misunderstanding is so vast that we are increasingly careful about calling human beings liars. So with the world of things. Until reason for doubt appears we take it for granted that the universe is friendly—or at least intelligible to our reason. Even the most carefully moving scientist, who doubts every result of his experiment till he has checked up the result in every conceivable way, assumes that there is a truth which he can get at. The bottom assumption is that truth can be reached. The fundamental method is that of a leap ahead by guess, or imagination, with the careful checking up afterward. There can be no checking up until there is something to check up—and that something is not itself reached merely by checking. The method I follow, then, in dealing with any problem that bears upon life as heavily as

does that of a belief in God is to put upon the facts the largest construction that they will bear. In any realm of study we cannot get far without approaching our field sympathetically. Even in scientific research the power to divine as by an inner faculty the meaning of natural processes comes in highest degree to him who allows himself to be absorbed in the theme before him. This is all the more true with the artist who is seeking to feel his way into communion with nature. So, in the search for a satisfactory belief in God, there must be a venture. The God for whom I search is not to be found by whittling down beliefs to a minimum. I am looking rather for a maximum.

In the world into which I was born I found a belief in God which was taught to me in the home of which I was a member and in the church of which I became a part—a view rather generally accepted in the community to which I belonged. I did not find it hard to believe in the God thus taught. As I became older I found that this idea of God had been in existence so long as in a way to be part of that system of things to which I had to adjust myself. Nobody in our day and age of the world can

start in and build up an idea of God without taking account of ideas already wrought out. Anyone who pleases can reject any or all of these ideas, but before doing so, if he takes his thinking duties seriously, he will have heard enough about various ideas of God to make it impossible for him to start with a clean slate. In all his thinking he will have before him something already taught about God. The most barren of all quests would be a search for something absolutely brand new to say about God, or for God, or against God. There is almost nothing new to be said today either for theism or atheism—except in phrasing or in emphasis.

The view which I found here when I came into the world has always seemed to me—during the years I have been thinking about such matters—to be equal to accounting for those first three assumptions with which I said we must start. The belief in a personal God which I was taught as soon as I could learn anything is adequate—even in its traditional statement—to account for the world of persons, for the common-to-all realm in which the persons meet together, for the trustworthiness of human reason. Of course, now, if

some student insists that he must know how all this work of creation takes place—if he means by "how" anything more than the steps of the creative process—there is in the belief in a personal God no answer. That is not to be held against the belief in God, however, for there is no answer in any other theory or belief. All that can be asked of us in our thinking about God is that we provide a theory big enough and strong enough to furnish adequate basis for the facts. Theism is not under obligation to supply a prescription for creation.

The belief in God is here. I accept it not because it is proved but because it appears to me the best explanation of the universe of men and things which I can find. If the belief can be proved to be out of line with human reason—that is to say, if it can be positively disproved by irrefutable logic, I stand ready to surrender it. No such disproof, however, is yet in sight and when it does come in sight it will travel upon basic assumptions which cannot be proved. I shall always reserve the right to look both at the logic and the assumptions.

The serious objections to belief in God today are chiefly two—that belief in personality in God

is not consistent with present-day emphasis on impersonalism; and, that the hard facts of the universe are not consistent with belief in the goodness of God. The trouble with impersonalism is that it cannot of itself explain the personal. To be sure the Bertrand Russells can tell us that existence is just "neutrals" that appear from one angle as physical events in a space-time frame and that appear from another angle as mental. It is possible to make something of a showing even in measurably strict logic for this philosophy. Even with the strictest logic, however, we cannot repress a suspicion that the author of the reasoning is quietly laughing at us. It is too ingenious and fine-spun—a bit too clever to be taken seriously. Moreover, it is too long a jump from a neutral to anything as completely the opposite of neutral as is full and warm personal life. The passage from the impersonal to the personal has never yet been satisfactorily made—because the impersonal is less than the personal. Herbert Spencer once broke out on the defenders of mind with the avowal that no matter how fast thought can move light can move faster. Well, let light move as fast as we please.

Light never becomes conscious of how fast it is traveling. The discovery that light runs along at 186,000 miles a second was not arrived at by light itself. That discovery required a high-powered development of strictly mathematical processes reaching back almost to the beginning of the history of mankind. Moreover, the movement of the mind in a mathematical reflection or investigation can only in figurative language be compared to a movement of light. On the other hand, the personal can by thought and deed set the impersonal over against itself. At least when we are at our highest and best we cannot but think of consciousness, or self-consciousness, as the loftiest form of reality. When the naturalistically-inclined thinker seeks to awe us by the vast immensities and the infinite littlenesses of spatial measurements the adequate rejoinder is: Who found all that out?

The objection to personality in God is due at bottom to reflections upon the frailties of human personality. We shrink from carrying all our mental dependence upon time and place, our subjection to change and decay, into the nature of God. We do not need to carry all this into the idea of God.

The essential quality of thinking is timeless. Thought, as act, is psychologically in time—but thought as content is timeless. All that we ask is that power to think and feel and do as seen in human personality be taken as a key to the nature of the divine, when stripped of the incidental weaknesses of the human.

The second objection is much more serious. There is much in the universe which, on the surface, contradicts the idea of a good God. The majority of persons who have thus far lived on earth have not had even the physical requisites for an approximation to genuine human existence. The problem of animal pain—reducing that pain to the last possible minimum—is utterly beyond any satisfactory guess at an explanation. All the explanations thus far advanced make the problem worse. We need not draw back from admitting our ignorance here and from insisting that the fact that a problem is not yet solved does not mean that it can never be solved.

On the whole, we admit that the believer in God has no easy path before him. Yet the line of greatest resistance here is better than any line

of least resistance, for the latter ends in a common-place, prosaic nowhere. The belief in the Christian God is an achievement, and such achievements bring their own rewards with them—a feeling of being at home in a friendly universe is one such reward. Of late a distinguished thinker has been trying to get us to cultivate good cheer on a "firm basis of unyielding despair." Now, despair is as subjective a quality as hope; there is at least as much basis for hope as for despair. The problem as to how bad got into a good world is not as hard as the problem as to how good got into a bad world.

For myself I am willing to venture out in my interpretation of the universe on the assumption that God is as good as the best I can see in the world. I am not here making a plea for Christianity—there is not space for that. The best I see in the world is Christ, and a God as good as Christ would meet all our known needs. I am well aware that I am not now formulating an argument, but I am not trying to. I was asked to write about my *belief* in God.

II

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT CHRIST

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN

Scholar, teacher, preacher, executive, Henry Sloane Coffin is a many-sided man and holds a commanding position in the religious life of America. Six years after his graduation from Yale University, he was invited to return as university preacher and he has been a regular and invariably acceptable preacher in that and many of the other foremost universities since. The Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, of which he was for twenty years the senior minister, is regarded by many on both sides of the Atlantic as perhaps the most outstanding parish in America—uniting in its membership the wealthiest and least privileged of New York's polyglot population and ministering to every aspect of its people's life. At present he is President of Union Theological Seminary in New York City; but other responsibilities to which thought and time are generously given include the chairmanship of the boards of Robert College, Constantinople, the Masters School for girls at Dobbs Ferry, N. Y., and the Church Extension Committee of the Presbytery of New York; the vice-chairmanship of the National Student Committee of the Y. M. C. A., and membership on the Corporation of Yale University and the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Coffin is a New Yorker, born in 1877. After graduation from Yale, he took his theological work at New College, Edinburgh, at Marburg in Germany, and at Union Seminary where he graduated in 1900.

He already had begun his first ministry—in a hall above a butcher shop in the Bronx—and after five years given to building up this church, he was called to the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, then badly run down. In fifteen years it had been made one of the most powerful churches in America with a membership exceeding two thousand, a Sunday School of seventeen hundred and a staff of more than twenty workers. Throughout this period, he had been giving a fraction of time to teaching at Union Seminary; in 1926 he became the president of its faculty.

Few men in the American Church possess such a rich cultural and intellectual background in union with such wide acquaintance in every aspect of religious scholarship. His speaking and writing are invariably characterized by exceedingly thorough preparation, intellectual acumen, a measured liberalism and a persistent emphasis upon the basic essentials of the Christian faith. Few men in America carry heavier schedules of appointments; none is more unfailingly generous in response to the many demands upon him. Competent and consecrated Christian leadership has ever been one of his deepest concerns; he has been trusted counsellor, spiritual sponsor and loved friend to more of the younger leaders of the church than perhaps any other of his generation. His important books include: *The Creed of Jesus; Social Aspects of the Cross; The Christian and the Church; The Ten Commandments; In a Day of Social Rebuilding* (Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale); *A More Christian Industrial Order; What is There*

in Religion?; Portraits of Jesus Christ; What to Preach (Warrack Lectures).

It is said no American church leader has been the recipient of so many honorary degrees. Among the colleges which have so honored him are Yale, Princeton, New York University, Hamilton, Harvard, Amherst, and Glasgow University.

THE MEANING OF JESUS

BY HENRY SLOANE COFFIN

JESUS is to me first of all a figure in human history. The documents which purport to narrate his career must be studied by the same methods which we employ in investigating similar records of the past. As I read them his figure emerges —a teacher whose sayings both in form and content place him above all who have spoken of God and of the life God asks of his children—a healer with singular power over minds and bodies—a friend with transforming influence on the lives whom he attached to himself—the Messiah who believed he had a unique rôle in God's plans for the Jewish nation and for mankind. And not in these documents only, but also in the effect which he has produced upon his own and subsequent centuries, one gains an impression of the dimensions of his figure. The size of a stone thrown into a lake may be estimated from the waves which it sets in motion. Taking a religion which had been confined to a fringe of proselytes in a single small

nation in the Roman Empire, he so transformed it that from his day it began a new career as a world religion.

When one asks what was Jesus' chief contribution to this religion, it is difficult to give any answer other than just *himself*. It is not mainly his teaching, much of which is not new with him, although his masterly selection of the vital elements in his ancestral faith and his artistic phrasing of them gave that faith fresh creative force. It is what he was and did which adds point and power to what he taught concerning God and man's life with him. A devout Jew, like Saul of Tarsus, reared in the religion of his fathers, after his contact with Jesus cannot think of God apart from him, and speaks repeatedly of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

And for Paul and the Christian Church throughout the centuries the cross, the symbol of Jesus' self-giving in life and death, has been the distinctive emblem of this religion as Jesus sent it forth in his Gospel. The God and the ethical ideal of Christianity are most clearly manifest in it.

In the first public event of his career—the baptism at the Jordan—Jesus took his place beside a penitent people and received with them the symbol of their entrance upon a new life. It is significant that he began his ministry not with a sermon but in an act. He did not join John the Baptist in preaching repentance in view of the approaching reign of God. He believed in John's message, and he commenced his own preaching later by repeating it in part. But he first insisted upon sharing in this act of corporate penitence and dedication. This is said to have troubled John and has puzzled Jesus' interpreters from the first. Our fourth evangelist omits the account of Jesus' baptism; our first evangelist attempts to explain it. Jesus' social conscience, holding him responsible for the quality of life in his church and nation, had been roused by John's preaching, and led him to join with contrite folk in their public confession of sin and of consecration to God's will. The documents agree that in this act at the Jordan the ministry of Jesus began and that he then knew his vocation as God's representative. God, whose servant and son he deemed

himself, is one who is burdened with the evils of his people and who devotes himself to bring in a new day of loving justice.

It is this which seems to me the distinctive element in Jesus' Gospel of God. It is not so patent in what he said as it is implicit in what he did as God's representative. In the light of it one can understand the lonely struggle with temptation in the wilderness where he put away methods of achieving the reign of God which are incompatible with it; the similar struggles with his disciples and their ideals; the resolve to go up to Jerusalem and risk a public encounter with the leaders of the nation; and, above all, the ordeal in Gethsemane where at length he accepted death as his Father's will.

The Christian Church has instinctively turned to the cross to discover the essence of its message concerning Christ and God. The Father's love suffers in the blindness and wilfulness of his children; it bears and does everything which love can, with and for them. His Son reveals him by doing his all in word and life to redeem his brethren to the purpose of their God, and then by

letting them do to him as they will, believing that in bearing what they inflict on him God will work an even greater deliverance for them. Those who are delivered follow Jesus in a service of like faith and courage and devotion.

This was the heart of the religion of Jesus to the most discerning Christians of the First Century to whom in the New Testament we owe the classic interpretation of Christianity. "God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." It is not that Jesus offers himself to alter God's attitude toward sinning men. His sacrifice of himself in life and death is a companion sacrifice to an already self-sacrificing Father who had patiently borne with man's selfishness and folly and given himself ungrudgingly to serve them. Father and Son are one in conscience, one in their toil for men, and one in their endurance of that which men cause them to suffer. Love only *is* power where the hearts of human beings are concerned. Love suffers where there

is sin and by suffering love works redemption.

To us to-day the burning question is whether Jesus' faith in such a God as he represented in life and death is correct. Is there over and in the universe one who is love, and who is ever seeking men to make them sharers of a love like his own?

To me Jesus and the sequel of his career through the centuries are the chief evidence of the correctness of his message. Despite the baffling and appalling reality of evil, we find ourselves in a universe which has been capable of producing him. To be sure it has produced much else; but nowhere else had it the same responsive material as it found in his will. Without closing our eyes to the grim facts of pain and wrong, we are obliged to grant that there is Something in the universe which made possible and sent forth Jesus. Is there a more adequate interpretation of that Something than Jesus' own—a God akin in purpose to him?

Further, Jesus kept constantly drawing on the universe for the resources which he needed to be *himself*. And he did not feel cheated. The re-

sources were there for him. The supreme instance is the crucifixion and its consequences. In the tragic hour of his seeming defeat and his most real agony he felt himself unsustained, and cried: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" If that had been true, if his life offered at Calvary were allowed to be sacrificed in vain, it would be conclusive proof that his trust had been misplaced. No such God as he relied on could be controlling our world. But the crucifixion is not the final event in Jesus' earthly career. His enemies were convinced that they had given him his quietus, and that never again would he trouble the Jewish Church or the Roman Empire. But he was a far more potent factor *post mortem* than *ante mortem*. Many more people were being quickened by him into new life with God. And his disturbing and renovating presence in our world's life still persists. However one may interpret what took place at Joseph's tomb where the body of Jesus was laid, there is no question of his resurrection in power and his present life in the hearts of his followers the world over. This is to me the response of the

universe to the faith of Jesus—a response which justifies his confidence in God and validates his conviction concerning him.

To be sure it does not so demonstrate the reality of his God and Father that faith ceases to be for every Christian a venture; but we hazard ourselves upon enterprises in our day at the prompting of his Spirit, looking unto Jesus "the pioneer and perfection of faith" for inspiration to like courageous assurance.

Jesus to me is, therefore, the Christ who sums up and completes the highest religion in the world before his time. And as I study other faiths, he seems to me their Fulfiller also. Christianity is not to me one among many religions, but religion in its consummate flowering. The religion of the future will not be an amalgam compounded of Christianity and other faiths, but Christianity in which the Spirit of Jesus is loyally followed in all man's relations with God and with fellow-men. In other faiths certain virtues may have been cultivated better than among the Christians we know, and certain religious resources may be used which we do not seem to employ; but these are never incom-

patible with Jesus. Those who pass from other religions into Christianity are not aware of parting with anything vital in their religion. They find in Christ all and more than they previously possessed. In taking his Gospel to the world we go never to destroy anything of worth, but to conserve and perfect it. It is because apart from Jesus every life is incomplete, that it seems to me the obligation of Christians to share him with the whole world.

Jesus is also to me *authoritative* in the interpretation of man's life with God. He is the expert in religion and we discover for ourselves the correctness of his convictions and the value of his ideals. This does not mean that we accept them in the forms in which he held them. He does not ask us to *copy* him, or even to *obey* him, but to *follow* him. This involves employing our own minds with his freedom and his fidelity to the living God. The more imitative a man tries to be, the less will he resemble the pioneering Jesus. We do not attempt to construct a creed or an ethical code out of his words. We cannot reproduce First Century thoughts in Twentieth Century minds, nor find a

system of morals suited for a machine and urban civilization in his occasional sayings to Galilean fisherfolk and farmers. But Jesus has become the conscience of mankind, so that instinctively we judge ourselves and our society by his mind. We constantly find our world and our own motives condemned by him. And not only condemned, but he also lights us to some better course and impels us to attempt it. Instead of holding us back to First Century beliefs and behavior, he keeps pushing us forward to live in fellowship with his Father in our time, finding God's will for us in present-day situations and reporting our experiences of God in terms which make him credible to our contemporaries. His authority lies in his power age after age to create men akin to himself in faith and hope and love. In loyalty to him his followers become like him in temper and outlook. Thus they understand God better. As they grow in character and wisdom, they do not outgrow Jesus, but rather they grow up towards him. He remains always their leader—the judge of their truest and best and the creator in and with them of a truer and better. In religion and ethics Jesus is our Lord.

Nor is Jesus to me a figure of the past only; he is also a present Companion. Time scarcely enters into relationships such as men sustain to him. The light of a star in the evening sky may have left it centuries ago on its earthward journey, but we know it as part of tonight's illumination. The light of Christ began to shine in our world with his coming, but it is a present guide to our path. Further, one who so fully shared God's life then cannot be thought of as sharing it less fully today. That was Jesus' own assured faith in the abiding life with God. In our fellowship with God we know ourselves in union with Jesus, just as in fellowship with Jesus we reach our closest oneness with God. Jesus remains our most significant contemporary, mediating to men age after age his own life with the Father.

Finally, to me Jesus is the unveiling of God in a human life; he is God in Man. When I think of the Spirit manifest in the energy and order and life and beauty of the world, in the truth which commands our minds and in the goodness which sways our consciences, I think of Jesus. He is to me the supreme manifestation of what God is. He,

therefore, defines God for me; he is the most adequate symbol of the invisible Most High and Most Near. Jesus *defines* God, but he does not *confine* him, for God manifests himself in myriad forms and comes to us along countless paths. Jesus is not the exclusive or exhaustive disclosure of the Father, but he is the distinctive revelation of his character and purpose.

And in so revealing God, we do not think of Jesus as tearing aside the veil from a God who wished to remain concealed. The God in whom he believed is always seeking man. Religion is, therefore, a double quest—man's search for God and God's search for man—and the latter precedes the former. Religion on man's part is essentially response to a self-communicating God. He puts himself into all his creation—into nature so far as it can contain and express him, into man in the measure that every life or every social group or humanity as a whole can receive and manifest him. The disclosure of the divine in Jesus is accordingly God's self-revelation in One who was entirely responsive to him.

How Jesus supremely of all our race should be

the self-disclosure of the Father remains a mystery. But it is a mystery akin to that which in an evolving world brought the highest development of the art of sculpture in ancient Athens, of the English drama in Elizabethan England, and of sacred music in the German Bach. The individuality of every man is inexplicable, and we cannot account for Jesus. The New Testament writers employ various first century metaphors to throw light upon him—an anointing with the Spirit or a noble spiritual ancestry, a birth by the Spirit of a Virgin or a pre-existent Word made flesh. These hardly assist a modern thinker, although he may find that they express in terms of their day his own faith that Jesus comes from God and is God at work among men. No doubt there was in Jesus' case, as in that of other unique personalities in their spheres—a Michelangelo in art or a Shakespeare in letters—a favorable factor for their distinctive mission in the society to which they were born and in the age in which they appeared. The New Testament links the manifestation of the Divine in Jesus with the coming of "the fulness of the time." Our efforts to account for unique personalities always

result in our discovery of divers social factors plus an indefinable element—the man's individuality. Nor are Christians eager to deny that other personalities—a Buddha or a Socrates, and especially the great prophets of Israel—have been true revelations of God to men. But the fact remains that in seeking a satisfactory symbol of the divine none of these approves himself to us as does Jesus of Nazareth. To the age-old question What is God like? we are constrained to answer, For us he is like Jesus. Whoever sees him sees the Father. To us and to thousands of every race and of many centuries Jesus is the saviour from fear and selfishness and estrangement, and he is the life-giver who creates men into the likeness of the God we worship, and through them is creating a commonwealth of mankind in which the God once revealed in him shall be manifest in a society whose ways are love. In view of all that Jesus has done for mankind and of all that he continues to be to those who trust him we cannot express our conviction by saying less than that in him God has come among us in his fulness and given us his very self.

III

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT THE SPIRIT AND LIFE

LESLIE BLANCHARD

LESLIE BLANCHARD

Leslie Blanchard is the Executive Secretary of the National Student Council of the Y. W. C. A.—the organization whose field of responsibility embraces the more than five hundred women's college Christian Associations.

A Californian by birth and in education, Miss Blanchard graduated from Leland Stanford University in 1912. Most of the years since have been given to the work of the Women's Student Movement, first as Secretary for State Universities, more recently as Associate Executive and Executive Secretary. She is a member of the Institute of Pacific Relations, of the General Committee of the World's Student Christian Federation and its executive committee, of the Committee on Militarism in Education, of the Association of University Women and of the Fellowship of Reconciliation; and of the editorial board of *The Intercollegian.*

Miss Blanchard holds the M.A. degree in theology and ethics from the University of Chicago and during the years 1928–30 has been on leave of absence for graduate study. She is a Fellow of the National Council on Religion in Higher Education.

Miss Blanchard combines a profound sense for the deeper ranges of worship and personal religion with interests which move out widely to every horizon of politics and culture. A mind of quite unusual depth and range, great gifts in public leadership and a richly furnished personality have made her the out-

standing leader of college women in matters of religion, and a figure of recognized importance in all aspects of women's interests in this country. In this essay, she develops one of her favorite theses—the services of religion to life.

RELIGION'S SERVICES TO LIFE

BY LESLIE BLANCHARD

"I BELIEVE in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life." Whatever ancient meaning that great declaration may have had, it suggests one of the most outstanding of our modern convictions, that religion and life are bound together. If religion means anything, it has that meaning through its connection with life. The intellectual beliefs of this generation have been influenced deeply, if unconsciously, by the idea that whatever may be man's ultimate destiny, his life is to be lived, and his salvation worked out, in this world, with the materials which it places at his disposal. So life is the central concern of religious thinking and endeavor, and religion is heard when it is speaking of life, its needs, its meaning, its possibilities, and its destiny. We want to find the richest and most delicate development of the purpose and powers within our possession, and to make the truest connection with the environment in which we live and on which we depend. How does religion help us?

All religion is related to life, but not always usefully. It may contribute nothing to the values of life, nor to its enrichment. Much modern religion does not; it is like excess baggage for a traveller, stuffed with things which are of no use on the journey. We can see this sort of religion all about us. When does religion fail to contribute anything of real value to life? Herman Melville says somewhere that any fish can swim near the surface, but only the great whales venture out into the deep sea. When our religion stays near the surface, deals with nothing important, serves as a surface approach to experience and never goes out into the deep water, it is contributing nothing to life. It may be a positive harm. When it is a sham, an exterior reproduction of behavior judged to be correct, or protective, or conventional, then it is certain that religion can contribute nothing more than a way to behave in a familiar situation in which somebody else has set the pattern, or devised the ritual. That is a very popular form of religion, as well as of social and economic behavior in America, just now. It can serve no situation in which there is no known and fixed pattern to fol-

low. Social control through authority cannot be the chief element in a life-centered religion, nor can it be made to work in a stream of events in which the unexpected, the precarious, the unstable, are ever present. When religion is used to escape from intelligent and responsible dealing with any situation, it cannot be adequate to the realities of modern experience which calls for all the intelligence, imagination, and courage we can muster.

Another sort of religion that is useless in the march of life is the search-after-comfort variety, a sanction of pleasant and well established privileges in a social scheme ministering to security by divine provision.

In his recent articles, John Dewey has been saying that "the loyalties that once held individuals, which gave them support, direction, unity of outlook, have well nigh disappeared, and in consequence we are confused and bewildered." When religion does not represent fundamental loyalties or makes an appearance of devotion to causes and purposes which are never taken seriously, and never made the center and goal of life, it can make no moral demands on us, never call for every

ounce of strength, every drop of courage and never be our comrade in events which do just that. A narrow field of vision, scanty data drawn from limited areas of experience, cannot produce religion with range and depth. It reminds one of the crew who set sail with the Bellman to hunt the Snark, rejoicing that

"Other maps are such shapes, with their islands and capes!
But we've got our brave captain to thank,
(So the crew would protest) that he's bought us the best—
A perfect and absolute blank!"

To fail to admit all the facts of experience, to shut one's eyes against the disagreeable, the unexplained, the threatening, to forget "fairies, and all the multifariousness of the world," means a foreshortened and inaccurate view of the world, and a timid and inelastic religion.

Religion and life are related fundamentally, but that relation may be casual, limiting, superficial, false to reality. Much modern religion is like that —sugary, sentimental, weak in reality and in positive connection with objective facts and meanings.

We feel a distaste for its externality, its lack of grip and command, its nerveless ethic, and its beautiful and uncreative idealism. What sort of religion will make a positive contribution to life? Professor Hocking says that we are instinctive connoisseurs of it when we meet it in persons, and have no need of definition. But to recognize its values in ourselves is really no simple matter.

While we may move about in the physical world curiously and carelessly, we cannot forever maintain an attitude of nonchalance to the universe, nor remain without thought as to its meaning, and the bearing it has on our values and destiny. Man has a thinking machine, however faulty, and we do not forever and always believe what is comfortable or what fits into the sunshine and security of some immediate moment. Religion that counts in life helps us to some sense of the whole, some meaning, some philosophy of life, slowly forged out of the materials of our own experience. There was a time when the great drama of the Fall and the Atonement which is at the core of Christianity gave such a meaning, and represented a world whose destiny men knew and a God whose dealings

with them they could describe with definiteness. Religion has always produced some drama, some image which serves to explain vividly the meaning of life and its destiny. And that is one function of vital religion today, to help in the discovery of such meaning, to keep it vivid, and related to the march of events, to provide loyalty to something greater than ourselves, so that life has range and reach and depth. In whatever terms this may be set, no matter how it may change in the course of years, religion provides such an element in life, and the only religion that counts is a sincere, dogged, courageous, continual effort to grasp the meaning of the realities in which we are set, human and non-human. We must start with some inherited view, some beliefs forged out by men who lived before us and passed on their best effort; all knowing starts with some belief, some meaning which is a deposit from former experience. Then follow criticism, experiment, the slow rejection or adaptation to our own experience. We may end in finding that the great dramas and the images of the past can serve us for our own discoveries, or we may make some new description, drawn from the colors

and tensions of the day in which we live, but in either case, the convictions of our own lives must go into it, and it must be our own, shot through with the stuff of our own experience; not merely an intellectual formula but an idea drawn from empirical sources, and used as the basis for a way of living.

Experience teaches us that we are in some deep unity with the universe, even though our knowledge of that connection is not final; in some way our endeavors are important to the whole. Human life is part and parcel of a going series of events and we are aware of a rich, deep connection and fulness of reaction between ourselves and these events. As we explore our situation by first-hand experiment, by scientific study, by reflection, by worship, we feel ourselves to be set within a system of reality, ordered, reasonable, consistent, within which a vast series of experiments is going on, in some cases conducted by laws we know, in others, by unknown processes and controls. Some creative activity, within which we are placed, is working to ends beyond our human reach, to something higher than we have attained, and we must carry our re-

lation to such a process with humility, courage, and as much understanding as possible. My life is a part of a larger reality, within me, and without, and my union with that rich and diversified reality cannot be broken. To discover and appreciate that relation, to lift it into a conscious, growing union, is an essential part of religion. If I were a preacher, I would want to preach of "right thoughts about God." That is what we need, and that is what each one of us must be moving toward in his own life—all the best thought of God that we can have, made deep and delicate by prayer, experiment, and reflection, by daily use, and by all the wisdom that the present age has to give. We can help each other to new depth and direction if we put our own thoughts in the simplest and clearest words possible. That is one of the supreme values of Jesus; he shared his own real and deep experience of God with such clearness and freedom that men could see what he meant; someone had caught his spirit when it was recorded as his saying, "All things that I have known of my Father, I have made known unto you." And we have that same task, in our generation, and from our own

experience. There are two tests to apply to our religion at any moment: Is it worthy to be held sincerely? Does it make room for growth and adjustment in relation to the reality of which we are parts? Unless we can believe in God in such a way as to receive enlargement of life, our religion is beside the point.

Another value of religion is its power to help us in self-knowledge. It enables us to see and discover those habits and attitudes that mean right relations within ourselves, with our neighbors, and with God. If our lives are lived in reference to values which have their roots within us and without, we are able to see and accept ourselves in relation to those values, without rose color, or protective explanations, or mock humility, or undue emphasis on either our abilities or our limitations. This is one of the hardest things to come by in all the world, and one of the most needed. It calls for honesty in dealing with ourselves, for willingness to go below the surface of life. We must see the hidden deficiencies and obstructions and we can do this best when we are living in relation to something more than ourselves, "other and more stupendous pur-

poses." The inhibitions, the fears, the self-defeating habits, the compensatory conduct, the emotional tantrums are recognized for what they are; we can see why we have dodged and failed. This is possible if religion rests on an unremitting attempt to be loyal to what is supremely important in life; it stores up and makes vivid and compelling for us our sense of living in a great enterprise, requiring our best powers, and enables us to see and act at our most peaceful and best. A great human love can do this, in some measure; or a deep devotion to some goal of human fulfillment; but a conscious union with God is the richest force in the universe.

Perhaps the deepest and most personal thing we learn is that God has given us natures we can trust and use fully, and has set within us the power of fearless growth. We must discover the habits and attitudes that deepen and enrich our sense of unity and purpose in life, and enter into their disciplines. Of these attitudes, the first and most important seems to be that we will live with God only as we find him in the situations and difficulties and events of life. This holds true of the smallest inner adjustment, and of social causes, and the development of

nations. Our knowledge of God is concrete, and depends on the way in which we live in each new experience and situation. Mr. Wells suggests that the first words of the modern creed are not "I believe," but "I give myself"—and so it is; I give myself to the next situation and experience, and from that union with its possibilities, comes all that confirms my confidence that beauty, cleanness, integrity, purpose, love, are inherent in the character of reality.

The basic attitudes of the movement we call the Christian faith seem to me to be a concrete expression of such religion and an adequate approach to the deepest questions of life and destiny. Confidence in life, its meaning and destiny; confidence in the possibilities of human nature and its development to new levels of experience through its relation with God; faith in God as the element in reality on which our destiny and our values depend and whose character and purpose have the qualities of love, steadiness, beauty and creative power; a compelling ideal of society, capable of drawing out our capacities for its realization; the continuous development of the disciplines and at-

titudes through which the deepest and most sustaining relations between God and men are maintained—these are rooted in the Christian faith. They have emerged in the course of the movement, expressed in the time garments of many ages. Each age adds its bit of growth, its new descriptions of reality, its experiments in living; corrects some aspects, adds others.

Nothing is more certain than that the richer any reality is, the higher in the scale of being, and the more important our knowledge of it, the less quickly we enter into its meaning and understand its nature. As Von Hugel said, "We get to know such realities slowly, laboriously, intermittently, partially. We get to know them only if we are sufficiently awake to care to know them, sufficiently humble to welcome them, and sufficiently generous to pay the price which is necessary if our knowledge is not to shrink, but to grow. We get to know realities in proportion as we become less self-occupied, less self-centered, more outward moving, less obstinate, and insistent, more rich in giving all we have, and especially all we are, our very selves." Religion is the part of life in which we

explore the most significant and valuable elements in existence, try to understand them, adjust to their character and their demands, and make our contribution to their rich fulness. No one ever can say it is an easy or a simple thing to be religious; it requires all the brains and courage, and steadiness and sincerity we possess, if whatever religion we make for ourselves is to add some essential quality and direction to day by day living. "Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak to thee," seems to be the demand God makes upon us, and we must meet him at our full strength, using all our powers, and then we can "speak," and be one in purpose and love.

IV

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT THE WORLD

HENRY NELSON WIEMAN

HENRY NELSON WIEMAN

An able thinker and certainly one of the most original among American philosophers and theologians, Henry Nelson Wieman has rapidly achieved a position of quite unique influence in his field. It has been said of him that he is the only Christian philosopher who is attempting to forge a genuinely new system of religious philosophy. He confesses his indebtedness to Professors Whitehead, Hocking and Perry under whom he took his doctorate at Harvard, but his thought also makes sympathetic contact at many points with that of the Humanists. Indeed, more than any other, he stands midway between the proponents of non-theistic religion and the more traditional theists, seeking to develop a point of view to which both can give allegiance. The foundation of his system is the philosophy of "organism" of Whitehead. In the following essay, he outlines one of his deepest convictions—concerning the fundamental character of our world.

Professor Wieman is a Missourian by birth (August 19, 1884) and his college was Park in Missouri. His graduate study in philosophy and theology has been completed at San Francisco Theological Seminary, the universities of Jena and Heidelberg, and Harvard. For ten years he was a member of the faculty of Occidental College whence in 1927 he was called to the chair of the philosophy of religion in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago.

Much of his point of view has been developed in

two books, *Religious Experience and Scientific Method,* and *The Wrestle of Religion with Truth;* but the temper of the man's mind may be more readily sensed from his articles in the *Journal of Religion, The World To-morrow* and especially *The Christian Century* to which he is a frequent contributor. The influence of his thought is very great with many, both ministers and laymen, particularly those who are most restless under old modes of thought. But many hundreds more owe him a debt of personal gratitude for his *Methods of Private Religious Living,* a simple manual of suggestions for the devotional life. For in Professor Wieman a rigorously honest mind is combined with beauty of spirit and a profound personal piety. Even those who cannot follow his philosophy entirely, on coming to know him come also to respect and love the man.

WHAT'S THE WORLD TO ME

BY HENRY NELSON WIEMAN

We cannot live without the support of the world. Also we cannot live without making the world different so that it will support us more constantly and adequately than it otherwise would. Whenever we eat and drink, even in the most primitive fashion, we make the world different. When we build a city we make it even more different. But all our doing is not upon the world from the outside. All our building of cities, cultivation of soil, making machines is the doing of the world just as much as an earthquake, or the freezing of the earth or the scorching of the sun. We are a part of the world and the world works in us and upon us and round about us. Therefore when we speak about the world we are talking about ourselves together with that totality in which we are immersed and of which we are a part. We as part of the world are sustained and made by that of which we are a part. This part which is ourselves reacts upon some other part to make it different;

then this other part, thus changed, works upon us to make us still more different in ways that we never wholly foresee. The point is that in discussing the world we must not think of it as something outside ourselves and different from us, but as including us.

Everybody must have some idea about the bearing of the world upon human values, whether he formulates it clearly and fully or leaves it merely as a vague and hazy background for his thinking. What is the nature of the world as a sustainer or destroyer of all that is most precious to human kind? That is the question we are trying to answer. This surely is not presumptuous for it is a question which everybody must try to answer who endeavors to apply intelligence to the conduct of his life.

Our first task must be to clear away certain mistaken ideas. We may not know very much about the world but we can be quite sure that some ideas about it are false. Also we can be quite sure that some ways of approaching this problem are mistaken.

One of the most widespread and obstructive

mistakes, which must be cleared out of the way at the very start if we are to get anywhere at all, is the notion that "science" can tell us the nature of the world as sustainer and destroyer of human values. It is true that the several sciences do give us the most important items of knowledge and the most important clues for constructing whatever working idea of the world we can have. But we cannot simply turn to "science" and have "science" answer our question for us.

Why can we not? Because there is no such thing as a science about the world. We have only the several different sciences and no one of them studies the world as a whole. No one of them even tries to study that feature or aspect of the world which bears most critically upon human welfare. Each of them studies only one meager aspect of the world. If you claimed that the aspect studied by any one of these sciences was the one most important for human welfare, you would have a fight on your hands at once; for every other science could make a like claim for its own aspect. Well, then, do not all the sciences together study those aspects of the world which are most important in

sustaining or destroying human good? Maybe they do and maybe they do not. But suppose they do. Can we, then, go to the sciences collectively and get the answer we want? No, we cannot, because the sciences do not give an answer collectively. Each speaks for itself. Furthermore you cannot take the descriptions given by each of the several sciences and mix them all together as you would a pancake batter. Neither can you fit them together as you would a picture puzzle. Ideas do not mix that way nor combine in that fashion. The only way to get an idea about a totality, from bits of detailed information about its parts or aspects, is to use these bits not as ingredients for a mixture or parts to be mechanically combined, but as suggestions leading on to an idea which is very different from any such mixture or summation. These are some of the reasons why "science" cannot give us the answer we are seeking although we must certainly draw upon the sciences for those bits of indispensable information necessary to form any adequate idea.

Often a popular magazine writer goes to "science" to get his idea about the world. Since there is no "science" about the world as a whole and

since the sciences do not give a collective statement, what does he do? He makes the most foolish mistake of all, but does it quite unconsciously. Trying to find a science about the world as a whole he stumbles on some one of the several sciences. It is likely to be that one or that small group which is among the oldest and hence the most highly developed and has the greatest prestige. That is the science of physics. It is easy to combine with physics that oldest of all the sciences, astronomy, and also chemistry. For the purposes of the popular writer these three can be called a single science. So he listens to what this science has to say. Then he comes back and writes an article or a book about what "science" has to say concerning the nature of the world as sustainer or destroyer of human living. He seems to have forgotten completely that there is such a science as biology or psychology or sociology.

Furthermore, there is a great deal of very important knowledge about the world which we do not get from the sciences singly or collectively and which they cannot give us. For example, you know that your best friend, say your mother or some

other person with whom you have been associated for years, is loyal to you. You may be mistaken, of course, just as the scientist may be and often is mistaken in his best established knowledge. But your knowledge of that friend is just as trustworthy as scientific knowledge. Yet it is not scientific knowledge in the sense of being knowledge which any one of the special sciences ever gave you or ever could give you.

But, it may be objected, this is knowledge about a particular individual and science does not give us knowledge about particular individuals. It only gives us general principles which apply to great numbers of individuals throughout wide reaches of space and time—statistical averages, we say. Well, if that be true, then here we have a kind of knowledge about the world which science cannot give us and it is exceedingly important knowledge. It is knowledge about individual things and particular persons.

There is still another kind of knowledge about the world, of enormous importance for the conduct of our lives, which the sciences do not give us. That is knowledge about the world reached by in-

ference from what the sciences do teach us. Let us illustrate this by a specific instance. This example is important not merely as an illustration of the point at issue but also because it is a bit of knowledge about the world of very great importance for human living although no science has given us any information about it. Yet we know it is a fact with as much certainty as we know what science does tell us. This fact might be called the fact of the winding up of the world. It requires a preliminary word of explanation.

One of the best established laws of physics is the law of entropy or the degradation of energy. The world is running down. Energy is not diminishing in amount but it is becoming evenly dissipated so that it will do no work. That means that ultimately not only must all life disappear but matter itself must disintegrate. Instead of a universe of matter as we know matter with at least a few specks of life, there will be nothing but a mild glow pervading space. Nothing more, no change, nothing. It will take a few trillion years for this state of affairs to be reached, but ultimately it must come, declare the physical sciences.

But Professor Whitehead and others have pointed out that if this is true then something else is equally true and this something else is contradictory to the conclusion above stated, which makes the whole proposition a self-contradiction. This something else is what we have called the winding up of the universe. That means that if the universe is running down there must have been, and probably still is, some counter tendency which builds up energy into forms which are available for "work," that is, for the activities which constitute matter and life. In other words, it is self-contradictory to say that the world has been running down throughout the infinite past unless there has been another counter tendency, on the average and in the long run equal to it, which has built up the universe. There are, then, two possibilities which are highly probable provided we consider the infinite past and not merely any finite period. These are (1) that the universe has gone through cyclic periods of building up and running down or else (2) it has been doing both all the time.

Here, then, we have something of which the science of physics has thus far told us nothing and

yet we know it by inference from what physics does teach. We do not mean to deny that physicists have made the inference. They have. Indeed it is precisely they who have done it for us. Professor Robert Millikan, for example, has even gone so far as to state the belief that this process of building up is now going on in the center of the great stars and hopes to bring it to light by astrophysical investigation. But when we say that the science of physics does not give us this fact about the building up of the universe we mean that the established physical description of the universe discloses no such process.

There is, to be sure, a building up of energy into higher forms going on in the world in the realm of biological evolution. But that is not a building up of the universe as a whole. So far as scientific observation can go it is limited to a very thin crust on this infinitesimal planet. Living organisms catch the flow of energy as it streams downward and build it into more complicated forms of activity and more rich and vivid forms of conscious experience. But so far as we have been able to observe the actual achievements of life thus far, this

building up is only an eddy in the downward flow. As energy streams to lower levels it turns back upstream for a moment in the form of living organisms only to whirl back again into the descending current.

Furthermore this building up of energy to higher levels, which represents the increase of all that is precious to human beings, is by no means to be identified with biological evolution as a whole. Biological evolution as understood by biology is simply that transformation which the organism undergoes in order to survive. Survival has little or nothing to do with rising to higher levels of life. On the contrary, many of the lower forms of life seem to be quite as well able to survive as the higher and more complex forms. Certainly in many environments they are much better fit. The struggle to survive, and the elimination of the unfit, in other words natural selection, is not a device which automatically brings forth higher organic forms. Only in rare instances do higher forms rise out of it. There certainly has been a progressive organization of higher forms of living, but the sciences, or at any rate the physical and

biological sciences, have as yet given us no description of how this takes place. They have given us a description of biological evolution; but that, we have stated, is another matter. That has nothing to do essentially with the development of higher forms of life. That simply describes how organisms undergo modifications which enable them to survive. Ability to survive must not be confused, as it so often has been, with that increased sensitivity and delicacy which make for the higher values.

But when we come to human life, more especially when we come to human life dominated by reason, we find a very definite striving for the increase of values. This increase of values always requires as one prerequisite the building up of energy into very complex organic forms where it is available for rich and vivid conscious experiences. This organic reversal of the process of entropy through the evolution of highly complex living organisms (for which prevalent biological theory has no adequate description), and the exercise of reason in the utilization of the energy thus stored, are the two processes which underlie the increase of

values. Both these processes, the development of complex living organisms and the exercise of reason, depend upon the downward flow of energy toward static equilibrium. The living organism and reason simply use this stream as it flows down to turn the mill of life and so produce the values of experience. They even pump some of the water back uphill by using the downward current of the stream. But what they pump up is infinitesimal as compared to the total volume of the downward current. And, as we have already stated, that point on the stream where life and mind are able to maintain themselves will eventually flow away entirely and become dry, according to the dictate of physics. Energy will become unavailable for living conscious beings and even for matter as we know it.

Here, then, we have the two great cosmic movements, one immeasurably more vast than the other so far as our observations have thus far been able to inform us. On the one hand is the vast slow movement toward decay, moving toward that state in which all life and all organized matter will disappear into a kind of static equilibrium which is

as near to nothing as we can imagine. On the other hand is the much smaller movement of life and mind which transforms this process of decay into a kind of rejuvenescence. It is like a flower that blooms with its roots in a vast heap of decaying matter. Such is the cosmic scene.

But let us turn to this process of increasing values by way of life and reason. Here we may find something of enormous importance, with a possible significance that is thrilling. At any rate the most important thing we want to know about the world is its bearing upon the maintenance and increase of values. Therefore we must ascertain what value is and what may be the status of value in the process of the world. For the world is precisely, we have seen, a process. It is a process having certain forms of definiteness. We want to know more fully what definite form of this process yields value and the increase of value. In a word we want to know more about this value-making process of the universe which generates and sustains the living organism and at its highest levels displays the function of reason. We want to know under what conditions this process which sustains

life and its values can maintain itself over against the process of decay and degeneration. We want to know under what conditions it not only sustains but also increases values. Above all we want to know whether there is any possibility at all that this value-making process can in the long run and on the average counteract the running down of the universe sufficiently to keep it from ever reaching that static equilibrium in which life and matter must fade out. If there is such a possibility we want to know what conditions must be met to achieve it.

The process of decay or running down of energy is the tendency of the universe toward maximum stability. It is a tendency toward the most complete static equilibrium and the most complete and unchanging order. Let no one think that this running down of the universe is a movement toward disorder, for it is not. It is just the opposite. It is a movement toward the most perfect order, most perfect in the sense that there is least change, least disorder, least innovation, least instability. It is very apparent, then, that we cannot simply identify value with order and the increase

of order, unless we are to understand that value requires the elimination of all life and all consciousness. That would seem to be a self-contradictory notion of value.

Over against this cosmic movement toward stability, fixation, and complete order is the movement that makes for life and mind. Life and mind require order also, but they require something more as well. They require a certain amount of disorder. They require innovations and consequently a constant disturbance of any fixed order. These innovations always introduce a certain amount of disorder, conflict, anarchy. The great problem of life and mind is how to combine these necessary innovations with that amount of order necessary to keep the anarchy that results from innovations from destroying life and mind. We cannot have life and mind without innovations and reorganizations. Neither can we have it without a certain amount of order. The problem is solved, when it is solved, by reconstructing the established order into a more complex system so as to include the innovations.

But most forms of life soon reach the limit of

their power to create these new and more complex syntheses which constitute a higher order including and harmonizing the innovations. When this limit is reached one or another of two things happens: (1) Either the innovations are not organized and adjusted sufficiently and the resulting anarchy destroys that level of life completely or makes it fall back to some simpler level where innovations are less numerous and less radical, or (2) the stabilizing, ordering, conservative tendency becomes so powerful as to drive out the innovations, so that consciousness fades and life slowly succumbs to the cosmic process of decay, running down to the static equilibrium.

There have been, however, a few forms of life which have displayed sporadically the power to carry on this process of innovation, constantly overcoming the anarchy and disintegration resulting from such innovations by developing a more complex order. It is these forms of life which have carried the value-making process to its highest levels. But even these forms of life have not been at all consistent and uniform in their upward march. Again and again the anarchy and

disorder resulting from innovations become too strong for them and they are destroyed or thrown back to some level where life is simpler and less creative, with less experience of value. Or, on the other hand, the conservative, stabilizing protective tendency becomes too strong for them, driving out or reducing the innovations to such a degree that this form of life can no longer resist the cosmic process of running down toward lifeless, static equilibrium.

Thus the march of life toward higher values is a constant hazard with swift death on the left hand and slow death on the right hand. The straight and narrow way of maximum innovation with maximum creative synthesis of these innovations into more complex systems of order is exceedingly difficult and dangerous. While many are called few are chosen, and none is chosen regularly and all the time.

Thus we have contrasted these two movements of the world, the one toward maximum stability and order, the other toward maximum intensity and richness of experience brought about through radical and numerous innovations combined with

progressive organization of these innovations into an order which prevents their mutual destruction or mutual interference. These two tendencies of the world, the one toward static equilibrium, the other toward progressive organization, seem to be antagonistic to one another and so they are in many respects. But they are also interdependent. The process of life depends upon the process of running down. The innovation and progressive organization would be impossible if there were not that release and dissipation of energy which constitutes the tendency toward running down. The movement toward static equilibrium provides the power which is utilized by the other movement for innovations and progressive organization. What is needed for progressive organization is not an elimination of the movement toward static equilibrium but such an adjustment to it as to (1) utilize the energy released by it and (2) escape the clutch of its current which drags down to death and (3) keep the whole world from running down completely. The last of these three seems most hopeless; but there are millions of years in which to find a way to solve the problem, and

life on this planet has scarcely yet gotten under way. Also it is possible that the universe is not only running down but is likewise being wound up on a cosmic scale, as Millikan suggests.

Here we have a cosmic cause to serve; and man can never be satisfied until he has such a cause. It is the progressive organization of the world in such a way as to sustain and magnify values. It is to use the energy of the downward current toward equilibrium and by means of it build up those innovations and creative syntheses by which life and mind with ever richer massing of experience yield the flower of growing value.

We say this is a cosmic cause because it is not merely the progressive organization of human life. It is the progressive organization of the world. It is true that we do not find it going on anywhere in the universe save on this planet. If this planet is the only place, then we are the sole representatives, the only champions and the single hope of the cosmos for this increase of value. Therefore the movement is cosmic in significance even though this planet be the only carrier of it. If on the other hand, it is also going on elsewhere,

as may well be the case, and if we ever discover it on any other star or planet, we must connect our forces with that process there, for we are serving a common cause.

Just how far this progressive organization of the world will go, how high it will reach, what its possibilities are, we do not know. We are only just now beginning to glimpse the vast scope and meaning of it. Mankind is just beginning to rub his eyes and awake as from a stupor with a vague feeling of what this movement is in which he plays a part. Perhaps innumerable men have no sense of it at all. But it is a movement which has to do with the rise and fall of a universe. It may be, if we dedicate ourselves to it and live in it and with it sufficiently to discern its meaning and its possibilities, we shall find that we are allied with the movement that winds up the universe and keeps in check and control the counter movement toward death and static equilibrium. It may be that we shall find ourselves at last, at the end of millions of years, reaching up among the stars to use and control the downward stream of energy as now we use and control the flow of rivers.

Perhaps the stream of the milky way will charge for us a dynamo of life.

But one thing is certain. This progressive organization of the world is not an invention of men. It was not devised or created by us. On the contrary it created and devised us. We have been produced by it, not it by us. Furthermore we cannot shape it as we like. It is mightier than we. We do not sustain it. It sustains us. We can ally ourselves with it, dedicate ourselves to it as the supreme cause of all existence and the one high vocation of man, or we can refuse to do so in part. We can continue as we have done in the past, to serve it only by accident half-heartedly, with much desertion from it and opposition to it. Yet we cannot tear ourselves from it altogether for it is our very life. Indeed if we do not serve it more faithfully than we have done in the past it will destroy us. For the process moves on whether we like it or not, whether we know it or not, whether we think to oppose it or not.

When we brought forth our modern civilization we never knew what we were doing. We never intended to bind men together into closer and

closer bonds of interdependence. We never intended by way of our machines to weave all the processes of nature into a single fabric with human hope and desire and love and hate. We never intended to bring the outermost stars and the island universes into closer and closer network of interaction with all the activities of our planetary life. We never intended that when men fight they should let forth such power of devastation as occurred in the last great war. And we never intended that when men unite with one another and with the rest of nature in a great synthesis of cooperation and good-will, they should have such power for good as now lies at their command. The process moves on whether we like it or not and it will destroy us if we do not dedicate ourselves to it ever more completely. Destruction or dedication, those are the only two alternatives.

If men should fail to dedicate themselves to this progressive organization and so be destroyed, the movement would be set back. It would not cease, for other forms of life would remain and presumably out of the remaining forms of life some other animal would develop capable of step-

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ping to the forefront of the movement where man now stands and of carrying on. For life will continue on this planet for millions of years. But man now stands at the fighting frontier of the progressive organization of the world, so far as our knowledge reaches. Just now is his splendid hour. He has the opportunity to give himself over wholly to the life-making, value-magnifying movement of the universe. Whether or not he will seize the opportunity, or even see it, is not yet clear. Will he mount the golden stair, that appears to him now as in a dream, and enter into a secret place of the most high where worlds are made and unmade and the utmost splendor of the universe is created? He may not. We do not know.

There is a strange weariness, loss of courage, dullness of vision abroad in the world, and the hour of opportunity will not stand forever. This sense of futility, this refusal to believe in any cosmic destiny for man, is chiefly due to the fact that men have found it impossible to believe in the supernatural. Heretofore for several centuries men have envisaged their highest values and vocation in terms of the supernatural. But there is

no supernatural and men are fast coming to see that there is not. But they are not willing to commit themselves to the naturalistic process. They stand looking wistfully off into the sky whence has vanished the delusion of the supernatural and think there is no longer anything to make human life magnificent. Joseph Wood Krutch with his *Modern Temper* has made one of the finest and clearest statements of this viewpoint. It is a view that is very widespread although rarely so clearly and honestly professed. Mr. Krutch like most of the intelligentsia is a supernaturalist who cannot any longer believe in the supernatural. Therefore he thinks human life is futile and the glory departed from it because the supernatural is gone. Most intelligent and cultured people today think, when you use such words as "God" and "religion," that you are referring to man's dealings with that delusion called the supernatural. And without this delusion, they think, the dignity and greatness of life have turned to ashes. But it is a delusion, they insist. This self-defeating attitude will continue until we can catch the full significance of our alliance with that progressive organization of the

world which makes for highest values, which is not supernatural. It is altogether natural but it gives to man the magnificence of a cosmic function.

There is another error which leads to this same loss of zest and high vocation. It is the widespread notion that humanity or personality is the highest object of devotion. When men lost the vivid sense of the supernatural, many of them turned to humanity or personality and sought to glorify it as the highest cause to serve. Here is the supreme object of greatest value and in serving this we find the grandeur come again to earth. But this was a mistake. Humanity is not great nor honorable unless it has some great and honorable cause to serve. Personality is not of supreme value unless it is dedicated to some calling of supreme value. If this truth is once grasped it immediately becomes plain how self-defeating it is to make humanity the supreme cause and personality the object of greatest value. Humanity is not great unless it has something to do in the world which makes it great. Manifestly, then, the doing which makes humanity great cannot be

the serving of humanity. Humanity is not worth our service and devotion unless it has something to do which makes it of worth. But if the greatest thing humanity can do is to serve humanity, immediately humanity shrivels to that kind of miserable futile animal which Mr. Krutch so well describes and Walter Lippmann tries so hard to escape. Personality is of supreme value only because of its possibilities; and its possibilities are supreme only if it has a cause to serve which is of cosmic significance.

The worth of living depends on the importance of the thing we are trying to do. If what we are trying to do has cosmic significance, life has its greatest worth. If what we are trying to do is to make other people comfortable and happy, and if the noblest enterprise of these others is to make still others comfortable and happy, and if we all thus find our highest vocation in thus trying to make one another comfortable and happy, the grandeur of life has certainly departed. We are like Gaston and Alphonse each bowing to the other and insisting he go first. Humanity becomes a group of individuals each serving the other but

no one going anywhere or doing anything which makes him worthy of our service. If I serve another and he serves a third and so on until it all comes full circle back to me, what has been accomplished? Nothing save a mutual scratching of one another's backs like pigs in a sty.

Personality can be fostered and magnified only by serving something greater than itself. If it would be great, it must be ruthless toward itself and toward other personalities. Personalities are immeasurably precious but only because they are the agents through which the highest reaches are attained in the progressive organization of the world. It is only as personality is ruthlessly subordinated to the progressive organization of the world that it displays a glory and a value that is supreme. Just as soon as the progressive organization of the world is sacrificed for the sake of fostering and developing personality, personality is not fostered and developed. It becomes a foolish, trivial fluttering thing that bows and smirks and finds by hook or crook some way to enjoy the world "as comedy or high tragedy or plain farce." It is only the ruthlessness of the cause and the

absolute dedication to it which give to personality a value that flames to heaven. Such a cause is the progressive organization of the world which counterbalances the opposite movement toward static equilibrium.

If this cause is to be served with any degree of adequacy men must unite their forces in a common devotion. Each man's good is all men's good and all men's good is the good of each when all unite in such a world-generating enterprise. All of science and all of technology, all of philosophy, social organization, cooperation and mutuality, equipment and dedication of personality are demanded. Greatest and most difficult of all is the cultivation of the required attitudes of personality which is preeminently a religious undertaking.

But the great error of a common type of modern liberalism must be eradicated. Humanity cannot serve itself. It must serve a cause that is greater than itself. Whoever loves father or mother or brother or sister or wife or child more than the cause is damned and for him the greatness of living has darkened into twilight. Whoever cannot say, Let the dead bury the dead, is not wor-

thy of the high calling of man. Jesus, who bade men forsake father and mother and brother and sister and house and lands in order to have all things dear and precious transfigured in dedication to the cosmic cause of man, called this cause the Kingdom of God. We today do not readily express ourselves in terms of kings and courts. Hence we speak of the progressive organization of the world creating an ever richer synthesis of experience. We believe the vision that lured the prophets of old was not other than this, however different their symbols. If this vision comes again and domes our life anew, the techniques and machines of the modern world, the power of invention and social organization which the age has mastered, will spring to life. Zest and gigantic enterprise will give us tragedy and glory.

V

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT MAN

ANGUS DUN

ANGUS DUN

Angus Dun was born in New York City in 1892 but the greater part of his youth was spent in Albany, N. Y. It was his early intention to study medicine, but during his undergraduate days at Yale his first contacts with active religion, especially through the philosophical interpretation of Professor Hocking and the practical interpretation of Henry B. Wright, directed him toward the ministry. He completed his Seminary course at the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge in 1917. His first charge in Lexington, Mass., was interrupted by the War and he was transferred to the Episcopal Church nearest Camp Devens, Ayer, Massachusetts. On the conclusion of the Armistice, there followed a period of service under the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook in New York; Mr. Dun was instrumental in collecting and editing the Committee's report published as *Religion Among American Men.* A year of foreign study at Oxford and Edinburgh followed. Then, in 1920, a call to the faculty of the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, where he is now junior professor of Systematic Divinity.

His contributions to religious literature include a small book of Good Friday meditations, *The King's Cross,* and frequent publication of essays, addresses and sermons in the religious press. A keen interest in the practical problems of social life colors his outlook and finds partial expression through the presidency of the Family Welfare Society of Cambridge.

By all who have been privileged to sit in his classes, Angus Dun is remembered as a teacher of rare gifts —simplicity and scholarship, clarity and charm, vigorous intellectual criticism and deep pastoral insight. To those who seek him out for personal counsel—and they are many—time is given unstintingly. His teaching has embraced Christian Doctrine, Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Pastoral Care and Religious Psychology. A steadily deepening interest in the last named has equipped him for this original and suggestive discussion of Man.

THE CHRISTIAN PORTRAIT OF MAN

BY ANGUS DUN

MAN has been described as an animal that makes pictures. So far as I know he is the only animal that makes pictures. And stranger still, he makes pictures of himself. He started making pictures of himself by scratching and coloring the walls of his cave. He has gone on making pictures of himself, carved out of stone, painted on canvas, cut into copper plate, and finally reflected on sensitive films. To these pictures, made with lines and colors, must be added the word pictures that man has made of himself and his kind. They range all the way from the word picture of the Garden of Eden to the latest book on human behavior. They are all examples of the efforts of man to picture man. And back of them all lie the unseen images that men hold in their mind's eye and try to embody in lines or words.

I heard recently of a college professor who had made a collection of pictures of Oliver Cromwell.

They begin with contemporary portraits and continue through many copies, and copies of copies, in various countries and at various times. It is to be noted that in the Dutch copies the features and the background take on a Dutch look; likewise with the Spanish copies. Evidently the makers of pictures were influenced by what they were looking for and their imaginations entered largely into their seeing. Something like this holds of man's pictures of himself and his kind. It is true that, unlike Cromwell, man is always here, waiting for another "sitting." But even Cromwell never looked quite the same, was never seen twice in the same light or against the same background. We must catch man on the move and report what we see or think we see in passing snatches. And what we see depends greatly on our point of view.

We see what we are looking for and are trained to see.

The anatomist looks at man from an angle very different from that of the employer. Few biographers are able to draw a picture of a well-known man which satisfies the man's widow—

and the widow seldom gives a picture which satisfies the man's friends! The same holds of our pictures of man in general. They are drawn from various angles and each shows some of the partiality of interest dominating the picture maker. When you open a text book of anatomy you see pictures of man which almost persuade you that he is an arrangement of levers, though when you come to the section on the nervous system it appears that he is an elaborate system of electrical circuits and connections. The psychologists who, as Professor Hocking remarks, now occupy the position of official portrait painters to man, picture him variously, according to the school to which they belong, as compounded of reflexes unconditioned and conditioned, as a bundle of instincts, or as the scene of a long battle between sex desire variously and fantastically disguised and social demand in the form of a censor. Some of the older books on ethics would give the impression that man is an embodied conscience. It would be going far to say that all or any of these pictures of man are wholly false, but they are certainly partial and illustrate the fact that

every special interest shapes and colors what we see in man.

Equally true is it that the picture we have of man is much influenced by its background or setting. A picture of Cromwell on horseback, the smoke of battle behind him, is quite different from Cromwell at home, absorbed in his Bible. You can not move a man out of his background and his relationships and leave the picture unchanged. If two men met and after a little while discovered that they were long separated brothers, presumably there would be a marked change in their mental attitude. Features, anatomy, clothing would remain the same, but each man would see the other as belonging to his own background, the background called "home," and it would make an enormous difference. It makes a great difference whether a man is seen as part of a family, or as the representative of a government, or as a book agent. The same holds of man in general. Seen against the background of vast meaningless movements of matter he appears an insignificant collection of matter. Seen against the background of a fierce struggle for existence he looks like an

exotic and precarious flowering of life on an indifferent planet. But when he is looked at in relation to his own buildings and plannings, his conquests and dreams, his moral aspirations and conflicts, he looks almost godlike—or at least like a fallen angel. We can not picture man apart from the relationships, setting, background in which we see him.

Among the famous pictures of man that we have inherited or that have been drawn in our own day is the Christian picture of man. In its essential features it is Christ's portrait of man, though many copies have been made. It has been much retouched, often conventionalized, and copyists have tried to fill in where he only suggested.

This picture, like others, has for us an interest that is more than academic. It really matters very much what portrait of ourselves we accept. It is a dangerous thing for a man to get firmly fixed in his head a false idea of himself. He begins to act the part. If we picture our fellows chiefly as competitors we shall deal with them in a different way than we would if we pictured them as friends.

This Christian picture of man, like all pictures, is drawn from a particular point of view and with a special interest. Christ was not interested in men's anatomy, their nervous systems, the grace of their movements, their place in the economic order, their organic relation to the higher apes. He was interested in their relationship to God, their spiritual capacities, their ultimate destiny. He looked at them from a religious angle. He was not even a psychologist save as everyone who is an interpreter of human behavior is a psychologist. His picture of man is much more like that of the artist or the poet than that of the physiologist or psychologist.

Again, he saw man against a religious background and his picture is really meaningless with that background cut away. It would be like a picture of a saint looking with aspiring gaze towards a large hole in the canvas. There is no meaning in calling any one a "son" when there is no such thing as a father and there is little meaning in calling one another brothers when there is no family setting. We might recognize each other as common products of a cosmic accident, but not more.

Christ's portrait of man is not given in a single whole. He never offers a finished sketch revealing in detail his whole view of man. His picture is found in fragments which suggest more than they directly portray; it is reflected in what he asked of men and in the way he dealt with men quite as much as in what he said about them. He asked perfection of men as though that were a suitable demand to make and the demand for which they were waiting. He treated them as very precious and summoned them to a life of sonship and brotherhood without pausing to point out all that was implied in such an attitude and such a summons.

No one can look at Christ's picture of man without being impressed with the worth he saw in man, a worth so far outstripping any obvious attractiveness or excellence.

What is the basis for any such exalted valuation of man? There are many ways of estimating a man's value. You may look up his bank account and reckon him to be worth $100,000. You may consider his productive capacity and figure that he is worth $18 a week. His capac-

ity for literary production may be used as a basis and the result may be about zero. Plainly no one of these scales of value throws much light on the Christian valuation of man. The closest analogy in common experience is found in the worth which a real family finds in its members. If I care greatly for a brother or for a sister my love is not in the first place based on any achievement to their credit; it is based, rather, on the fact that they belong to that community of affection which is my family. I love my brother for my mother's sake, on account of the sonship he shares with me and the brotherhood that knits us together. And the love which the good father has for his children does not wait for them to justify it. It is a prophetic and creative thing running ahead of present attainment and calling into being the responding loyalty which is the realized sonship. Christ cared for men as the objects of God's valuation, God's caring, God's hopes, as belonging by right to the community of affection of which he felt himself to be a member; his own faith in them and care for them was a creative and prophetic love which called out in men the response of sonship and brotherliness.

The essentials of the Christian picture of man are given in the words "son" and "brother." Sonship is something with which one starts life and which one cannot put off. It belongs to us because we belong to our parents and nothing we do or fail to do can take away that belonging. But equally our sonship is something to be achieved, a personal relationship into which we need to grow to become sons in the fullest sense. The given fact that one *is* the son of his father, does belong to his father, is the basis for the opportunity and obligation to *become* a true son to his father. Christ saw men as "belonging" to God and therefore "belonging" to him. He cared for them because they belonged.

The son's growth into full sonship is grounded and conditioned on the father's creative hope for him. A man's offspring does not become his son in the full sense merely by reason of their bodily relationship or by physical growth. If he becomes a true son it is the reflection of his father's love for him and the forming in him of his father's hope for him. A father is a trustee of hopes for his offspring. And few of us would amount to much if someone had not held high hopes in trust

for us. Christ came to men with such creative expectation because he was a sharer of God's hopes for men.

That man has it in him to become fully a son of God assumes a spiritual kinship between God and man. Spiritual kinship is the capacity to share purposes and thought and affection. Minds meet by sharing thought and so occupying common ground. Wills meet by sharing purposes and affections join in the objects of common appreciation. To be capable of nearness to God is to be capable of thinking his thoughts, willing his purposes and caring for the things he cares for. In that direction our kinship finds fulfilment.

In Christ's view our relationship to God defines our relationship to our fellows. We belong one to another because we belong to God. Beyond the fact of biological relatedness and of all "being in one boat" on this planet he sees men as rightful heirs with himself of the relationship with God which he had realized. We can not love God or share his life without loving our fellows. Whenever we fail to love our fellows we disagree with God. Equally, we cannot love our fellows as brothers without

seeking the best for them, which is the fulfilment of their sonship toward God. To seek anything less for them would not be wishing them well.

The evil in men about which Christ does not speculate but with which he contends is the fact that their thoughts are not God's thoughts for them, that their purposes are such that God cannot share them and their affections are set on false and passing values.

This Christian picture of man is compatible with the partial truth of many other pictures in the same way that your portrait painted by an artist with a seeing eye is compatible with the physiologist's picture of your muscular apparatus. It depends on the interests in mind which is held to be the truer picture. The physiologist might find the painting inaccurate at some point at the same time that a friend found it wonderfully characteristic. The Christian view of man has no quarrel with the biologist's insistence on our organic relationship with the developing forms of animal life. But if the conclusion is drawn that man is simply a beast the Christian mind protests, because the assertion is false and a dangerously false assertion. There is no

reason why a beast should not live like a beast. There are many reasons why man should not live like a beast and they all head up in the fact that he is a spirit who fulfils his own destiny only in moral selfhood.

The Christian view of man has no quarrel with the attempt to probe deeper into the workings of human nature by a method which disregards consciousness and treats man for laboratory purposes as a body responding to a world of objects, rather than as a mind dealing with a world of meanings and a spirit in a world of values. But it cannot accept as an adequate picture of man a sketch of him as a system of conditioned reflexes, even if the maker of the sketch is widely acclaimed as the latest fashion in picturing man. The same holds of the Freudian picture, now popular. Undoubtedly it points out much in man which earlier picture makers overlooked—conflicts and repressions and irrationalities which shape human dreaming and behavior in many ways. But Christ's insight, supported by Christian experience, finds the deepest and most destructive conflicts in man to be those between his own central and higher interests

and the more elementary drives within his nature, which are as often encouraged by his society as censored by it. And Christ suggests that a common trouble with man is not so much due to the control and repression of powerful impulses as to an incomplete repression, a beckoning back with one hand of what has been turned away with the other, an attempt to serve two masters. What men plainly need for the release of all their powers is a cause to which they can give themselves with a whole heart. Christ places the love of God and the faithful service of God's cause first, not as an arbitrary and restricting demand on men but as the only demand sufficient to give men the fulness of life of which they are capable.

Is not this Christian picture a true picture of man? It is not the easiest picture to accept, for though it gives us a position of the highest dignity it makes hard demands upon us and constantly condemns what we are. It calls for faith and prophetic imagination to be seen and recognized, but all that is deepest and best in us rises up to meet it and multitudes of plain men have been shaped by it into the Christ-likeness.

VI

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT SOCIETY

KIRBY PAGE

KIRBY PAGE

Kirby Page began life in Tyler County, Texas, August 7, 1890. At the age of eighteen he had already begun his life-work as a Y. M. C. A. secretary, but the persistent suggestion of a minister in Houston, Texas, first turned his thought seriously toward college. He graduated from Drake University, Des Moines, in 1915. Then followed six years of graduate study at Chicago, Columbia, and Union Theological Seminary—study interrupted by extended visits to the War Fields and the Orient, and made difficult by a growing household and responsibility for struggling churches of the Disciples' communion in Chicago and Brooklyn.

In 1916, Sherwood Eddy took Page as his private secretary on a trip to the Orient, and thus was begun an intimate association in work and writing which has been unbroken since. The name "Eddy and Page" is familiar wherever the Peace Movement and the effort for the fearless application of Christian ideals in every area of social relationship are known. Books and pamphlets written by them or published under their auspices have sold well over a million copies. Kirby Page's best known writings are: *The Sword or the Cross; War, Its Causes, Consequences, and Cure; Imperialism and Nationalism; Dollars and World Peace;* and *Jesus or Christianity.* He is the editor of *The World Tomorrow.*

Originally advised to confine his efforts to writing because his gifts were not thought to extend into the

field of speaking, Page has become one of the most widely sought after speakers to college students in the country. Whether in lecture or sermon, or in the question-period of a forum when he is probably at his best, he speaks with unchallengeable grasp of facts, with simple clarity, with intense conviction, but with fairness and humility of spirit which cannot fail to quicken admiration. Among college men and women respect for his knowledge and courage are matched by deep affection for the man. He is one of the best beloved leaders of the thought of youth in America.

MUST SOCIETY BE A JUNGLE?

BY KIRBY PAGE

NATURE is red in tooth and claw. The law of the jungle is that one species should prey upon another. The strong devour the weak. The fit survive and the maladjusted perish. Human nature is bone of nature's bone and flesh of its flesh. Scratch a man and you will find a tiger. The fighting instinct is deeply implanted. Competition is the life of trade and without its spur initiative would be destroyed. Self-interest is the dominating motivation of life. Let him get who can and let the devil take the hindmost. Until human nature is changed —and millenniums of evolution have made only surface impressions—society must remain a jungle. This is the working hypothesis upon which millions of men and women base their daily conduct.

Any student of history or observer of contemporary life can easily assemble a vast quantity of evidence to uphold this view. Greed and lust, hatred and fear, cruelty and inhumanity are frequently encountered in the record of man's ex-

periences. Masters often treated slaves worse than beasts of the field. Many a serf was compelled to live like a dog. Workers have often been regarded as mere cogs in the industrial machine which grinds out the profits that flow into the vaults of the owner. The bleached skeletons of innumerable victims are scattered along the pathways of industrial civilization.

Violence and bloodshed have been among the most familiar sights of history. Hardly a decade has passed since the earliest written records without a war in some region of the earth. Persecution and retaliation have in every century claimed victims without number. Not all these cruelties have been perpetrated with malicious intent. Indeed, conscientious wickedness has been responsible for many of the worst excesses. Almost every imaginable evil has been called good and blessed by the forces of righteousness. The blind have led the blind into ditch after ditch of iniquity.

Much of my own time during the past ten years has been spent in exploring the cesspools of society. I have written *ad nauseam* about danger zones and the menacing aspects of our civilization. But I do

not believe for a moment that the jungle theory is adequate or true. Human society appears to me as a potential brotherhood. Even in nature love and mutual aid have greater survival values than enmity and rivalry. The huge fighting mammals perished, while the meek and lowly in the brute creation still replenish the earth. Self-sacrifice is continuously manifested by the higher animals.

Human nature has enormous capacity for evil; it also has limitless potentialities for good. Kindliness and generosity, sympathy and affection, service and sacrifice are almost universally exhibited by normal persons. These attributes are as deeply embedded in man's original inheritance as are his anti-social tendencies. Every person has within him the making of a libertine or a lover, a criminal or a benefactor, a fiend or a martyr, a devil or a saint.

In all lands the love and devotion of mothers for their children is an invariable fact of experience. It is the exception and not the rule for a father to desert his family. Friendship is more common than enmity. Mutual cooperation is visible in all realms of endeavor. The willingness of a man to lay down his life for another is normal and natural.

The doctor who risks deadly infection rather than forsake his patient, the miner who breathes poisonous fumes in the endeavor to release his entombed comrades, the captain who directs the rescue and then goes down with his ship, the fireman who returns to the doomed building once too often, the patient who being stricken with a lingering malady remains joyous to the end, the reformer who endures ignominy and suffering in a tireless crusade against entrenched iniquity, the scientist who burns out his life in the eager pursuit of truth and reality, the judge who withstands mob passions so that justice may be done, the neighbor who returns kindliness for hostility, the teacher whose constant endeavor is to release hidden potentialities within his pupils, the artist who refuses to prostitute his talents for gain, the pastor who takes upon his own shoulders the griefs and miseries of his people, the craftsman who seeks perfection in his product, the nurse who tirelessly watches by the bed of pain, the prisoner who will not surrender his conscience to the crowd, the missionary who joyously submits to privation and loneliness out of sympathy and affection for his

friends the lepers—all these furnish grounds for belief in the essential nobility of human nature.

Every war and every crisis reveal unsuspected resources of bravery and self-renunciation. The World War laid bare the dregs of our civilization, but it also let us see devotion, endurance, courage and self-sacrifice on an unprecedented scale. Men in vast numbers left their homes and endured every kind of abomination and peril. Cowardice was common but courage was more frequent. Risking a man's life to save another occurred so often that it ceased to attract attention.

With such facts before us it is easier to understand why Jesus based his whole gospel on a belief in the essential goodness and redeemability of human nature. By trusting men and appealing to their nobler tendencies, he released in them a flood of abundant life. Christians should never forget that if the jungle theory is true their religion rests upon delusion and fraud. That a man can be born again, changed profoundly, is one of the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. Another is that the Kingdom of God, the new society, actually can be created. Otherwise it would have been cynical

mockery for Jesus to teach his disciples to pray: "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth . . ."

The evils of our civilization are not due primarily to the depravity of man's nature. The human stuff available for the creation of a new society is sufficiently sound and trustworthy to save us from despair. The real difficulty is found in the fact that many of the major appeals of our day are directed to the anti-social tendencies of man. The primary emphasis in our civilization is upon possession. An acquisitive society will always be divided and torn within itself. While the idea is held before children that success is measured chiefly in terms of luxuries and physical sensations; while natural desire for possession is accentuated in a thousand ways—just so long will society resemble a battlefield.

If for one generation we could control the stimuli that motivate human conduct we could wholly remake society. By substituting the ideal of creativeness for that of possession, we could transfer energy from the breathless pursuit of things to a continuous search for the good, the

true and the beautiful. If the combative tendencies were directed against disease, poverty, superstition, ignorance, ugliness and crime, instead of being released in an effort to annihilate human foes, unbelievable transformations could be wrought.

By exalting social cooperation and branding selfish competition as disgraceful, new channels of conduct could be opened. If the chief awards of society went to the creators of human values and mere possessors were frowned upon as parasites, a higher motivation could be engendered. Social approval and disapproval are among the most potent of all urges and inhibitions. To be called slacker or coward or traitor is more than most men will voluntarily endure. If anti-social conduct were always branded with equally burning epithets many of the destructive capacities of human nature would tend to atrophy. If we could control the stimuli! If!

But the inspiring fact is that we can control them, not completely but enough to give hope for the future. An imposing number of people are already responding to the creative appeal and are living in a manner that is socially constructive and

unifying. The areas of cooperation are steadily being extended. Tribes formerly engaged in mortal combat. For centuries city warred against city, and later feudal state against feudal state. The Scotch and the English once hated each other bitterly. Men of every tongue and color now live peaceably in metropolitan communities. States dwell amicably in a federal union and dominions are united in a vast commonwealth. Even nations have created a League and are slowly but surely learning that cooperation is preferable to combat. Three mighty human institutions—the home, the school and the church—are dominated far more by sympathy and cooperation than by distrust and competition. It is not impossible to implant the creative idea in the mind of the oncoming generation.

The rate of progress will be determined by the number of persons who take seriously the task of transforming society from a battleground into a brotherhood and by the quality of their devotion and intelligence. Any young man or woman who has sensed the tragedy of a warring world and who has glimpsed the possibilities of a cooperative society may share in the process of transforming one

into the other. Two great choices must be made: possession or creativeness must be selected as one's primary aim; and if the latter alternative is taken, a decision must be made as to which profession offers the maximum opportunity for releasing a man's particular potentialities.

It is obvious that possessive and creative pursuits are not wholly exclusive and contradictory. The difference is a matter of emphasis. Which comes first? If one must be abandoned and the other accelerated, on what basis shall a choice be made? Likewise, it is not a valid procedure to generalize or dogmatize concerning the relative opportunities afforded by various professions. Every legitimate calling offers a chance for creative endeavor and the need of the hour is that men should recognize and utilize these respective opportunities. It does seem, however, that the most urgent calls at present are in the broad realms of human personality and human relations. To help release the dammed-up potentialities of men and women for fulness of life and to aid in reconciling antagonistic individuals and groups, these are the foremost challenges to youth in every land.

As incredible as it may at first appear, creative living makes extreme demands upon the qualities of courage, faith and self-sacrifice. Creation often necessitates destruction—destruction of old ideas, habits, customs and institutions. Efforts to change things-as-they-are have always been highly perilous ventures. Men have been bitterly persecuted for advancing unproved theories, making fresh experiments, exhibiting strange modes of conduct and advocating new institutions. The innovator is more feared than the criminal and often assailed more relentlessly.

Let no man lightly assume that by making creativeness his aim he is thereby guaranteed a pleasant and successful career. On the contrary, he may fail to obtain his share of creature comforts and be subjected to all manner of abuse and opposition. Along the roadway of history are to be seen numerous broken shackles that once bound men and women. Not without pain and bloodshed were these ancient bonds shattered. "With a great price obtained I this freedom" needs to be written above the door of release from every paralyzing custom and institution.

To tear down the walls of partition that separate races, nations and classes; to rise above the bigotries, enmities and fears of one's group; to advocate the replacement of competition by cooperation and the substitution of devotion to the public good for private gain as the motivation of all endeavor; to denounce covetousness and greed as mortal enemies of mankind; to discount the value of mere possessions and to pursue steadfastly truth and beauty and goodness—all these will be accompanied by the misunderstanding, vilification and suffering which invariably are included in the price that must be paid for redemption from ancient tyrannies.

Whether human society is to be a jungle or a cooperative community of free spirits will be determined by whether young men and women of vision join in the frantic struggle for possessions or whether they faithfully pursue the joy and the pain of creativeness.

VII

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT THE CHURCH

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

No man in the American church stands in less need of introduction to the American public, both young and old, than Harry Emerson Fosdick. Through his preaching in his New York pulpit, through his radio addresses over a wide net-work each Sunday afternoon, through his writing, and most recently through his leadership of the new Riverside Church in New York, he holds a position of quite unequalled influence. Few would question that he is America's foremost preacher.

These are the principal facts concerning his life. He was born in 1878 in Buffalo, New York, and received his formal education at Colgate University and Union Theological Seminary, where he graduated in 1904. For eleven years he was pastor of the First Baptist Church, Montclair, New Jersey. During the greater part of this period, he also taught a few classes at Union Seminary. In 1915 he left Montclair to become professor of practical theology at the Seminary and, at about the same time, special preacher at the First Presbyterian Church of New York. The heat of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy focused upon him and led him to resign his pastorate. Shortly after he became pastor of the Park Avenue Baptist Church (now the Riverside Church), New York, retaining, however, his chair at Union Seminary.

His books, especially the *Manhood of the Master* and the trilogy of little devotional books which are

sometimes called the three "Meanings," have sold many hundreds of thousands of copies. The most important titles are: *The Assurance of Immortality, The Second Mile, The Manhood of the Master, The Meaning of Prayer, The Meaning of Faith, The Meaning of Service, Christianity and Progress, The Modern Use of the Bible, Adventurous Religion, A Pilgrimage to Palestine.*

Dr. Fosdick holds honorary degrees from Colgate, Boston University, New York University, Brown, Yale, Glasgow University, Princeton, Union College, Michigan, Rochester, and Ohio University. He is a trustee of Smith College.

This statement of Dr. Fosdick's faith in the church and his conception of the church of the future comes just as the great structure on Riverside Drive, New York, of which he is to be pastor is nearing completion. The Riverside Church, while maintaining relationship with the Baptist communion, will welcome Christians of all creeds to its membership. Located at the heart of one of the largest educational centers in the world, it will seek to minister to those of all ages and types. It is the most daring and significant experiment in church life in our day. Through its elaborate physical equipment, its large financial resources, its multitudinous organizations and services, its wide fellowship, Dr. Fosdick will attempt to create in fact his ideal of an inclusive church.

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

BY HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

OUR first article of faith in the church may well concern the church's inevitableness. The churches as they now exist are not inevitable —God forbid!—but some kind of church is. To be sure, if religion is merely an illusion to be outgrown, then the organization of religious life will also pass away; but if religion is grounded in reality some sort of church will endeavor to express and propagate it.

The idea that the church is supernaturally founded is for many of us incredible. We do not believe even that Jesus ever intended to found a church or foresaw that a church separate from the synagogue would come into existence as the result of his ministry. Much less do we think that any special church has either doctrines, sacraments, or polity that can claim the inspired support of Christ or his Apostles. All such ecclesiastical legalism is to us anathema and in our opinion rests upon a false philosophy and upon supposed historical facts that do not exist.

Nonetheless, we find profound sanction for the church—not in supernatural dictation, but in the psychological and social necessities of human life. The churches rose in answer to real needs; they have persisted because those needs are deep and ineradicable; were the churches to be demolished today human need would produce new forms of church life tomorrow. People who share a common religious experience will inevitably band together to worship as a community, to preserve their spiritual traditions, gain mutual strength from fellowship, express their goodwill in cooperative service, train their children in religious thought and practice, and share with others the values which they prize.

The inevitableness of the church makes it a social problem of the first magnitude which cannot be called solved until it is solved right. When the maladjustment of the churches to contemporary needs first appears, the natural reaction on the part of many is to desert them. The church is a failure, men say, and leave it. Many Christians in the United States have done that in this last generation, as anyone can see. It is the first response to

the apparent futility of the churches, but it cannot be the final response. We cannot permanently run away from an inevitable problem and the quality of the churches is an inevitable problem. What kind of churches shall we have in our communities? That question rises like Banquo's ghost; it will not down. It makes a difference to our families, to our children, to our education, to our philanthropies, to the moral tone of the entire community. If, deserted by the intelligent, the church falls into the hands of the ignorant, that makes sometimes a disgraceful difference to the whole town, and even entire states may find themselves in consequence held up by foolish legislation to prevent the teaching of scientific biology in our schools. Soon or late society has to turn back and tackle the crucial problem of the churches.

We are facing the same situation in politics. Politics also has become corrupt, so vulgarly corrupt that it has become almost a mark of virtue to many to say, I will have nothing to do with it. Millions of Americans have so deserted politics that not only is it exceedingly difficult to get our best folk to take office but many of our citizens will

not even vote. It is the first natural reaction to the corruption of politics, but it cannot be a final reaction. Sooner or later people find that they can let their government grow just so inefficient and that then, so vitally does government affect life, something must be done about it. Then, once more, politics takes the center of the stage, the best people go into it, public indignation flames up against its corruptions, public demands are made for its reformation.

With a similar shift of attitude toward the churches we are dealing today. The present churches are plainly maladjusted to modern needs, but to handle that problem by merely deserting them is to invite disaster. American life will never be at its best until its communities have churches of the right kind.

On this basis, criticism of the churches becomes, not peevish fault-finding but a constructive challenge and call for help. The sectarianism of organized Christianity, for example, is appalling. This must be frankly and insistently said in spite of the fact that denominations in their origins often represented noble and courageous struggles for liberty. Those who inveigh against denomina-

tions as such should remember that once there were none; once the communion of the saints on earth was a chain gang at lock step with one long whip cracking down the whole line to keep any man from deviating from that single control. Denominations came from the gallant determination of brave men, who loved spiritual freedom better than life, to end such ignominious slavery under an authoritarian church.

Today, however, they do not mean that. They mean two hundred different kinds of Protestant Christians in the United States when there is no need of it. They mean the senseless perpetuation of old, local differences, the tithing of mint, anise, and cummin, the elevation of pettifogging legalism in the high places of the sanctuary. They mean economic waste, the impoverishment of community life, the overlapping of agencies already pitifully ineffective. They mean the degradation of vital religion and the disgust of intelligent men.

All this, however, is a call for leadership. Personally, I do not think that the way out of this situation lies through a great overhead organization. One might well support almost any program

for church unity simply for its educational effect, but as for the practical solution, it does not lie, I think, so much in the endeavor to build by any *tour de force* a great world church as it does in the pioneering experiments of individual congregations that have made up their minds to be inclusive, not exclusive.

What we need in the churches is ministerial and lay leadership that in local communities will build from the bottom up non-sectarian, inclusive congregations—inclusive congregations housing different religious temperaments and allowing them their various methods of expression. If some types of Christians will not come in, let them stay out. The future, however, is not with the exclusive kind and if the inclusive style of church is well built it will gradually capture the center of the stream and crowd the old sectarian spirit into the shallows.

Again, the intellectual obscurantism of wide areas of the churches is appalling. This was the inevitable consequence of the Protestant Reformation. The Protestant Reformation blazed up out of a heated situation like a volcano and threw its liquid lava across the mind of Europe. But lava

soon cools, hardens, stiffens, sets. So Protestantism lost its blazing and mobile vitality, ran into the rigid molds of contemporary thought, and found those forms of thought in the intellectual life of the sixteenth century. What if Protestantism, instead of arriving then, had been postponed! What if the Protestant Reformation had not come until Galileo, Newton, and Darwin had finished their work! Then its thought would have stiffened into molds of modern thinking and nine-tenths of our theological problem would have been avoided. Instead, Martin Luther never would believe that the earth moves and loudly denounced Copernicus because he said it does, and the whole official thought of Protestantism was set in prescientific molds. The consequence is with us yet. For soon the Protestants began exalting the reformers, adoring Calvin, Luther, Knox, and, stopping with what they believed, refused to go further. On that last day at Leyden before the Pilgrims left for Southampton to sail on the *Mayflower,* their pastor, John Robinson, preached a farewell sermon. "He took occasion," said a member of the congregation, "also miserably to bewail the state and con-

dition of the Reformed Churches, who were come to a period in religion and would go no further than the Instruments of their Reformation. As, for example, the Lutherans: they could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw, for whatever part of God's will He had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. 'And so also,' saith he, 'you see the Calvinists. They stick where he left them, a misery much to be lamented.'" Much of the Protestant history is summed up in that sentence. We stick where the reformers left us, with their theology, their view of God, of Christ, of the Bible—"a misery much to be lamented"—and in consequence we have made even our churches prisons of the mind.

This, however, is a call for leadership—one of the most fascinating and important calls of our generation. The people of the churches are not wilfully blind. They are nearer to being the salt of the earth than any other organized group I know. They represent in our American communities the sources of our educational and philanthropic support. They are, in general, the best hope the coun-

try has, and when, as in the campaign against the big navy bill, they see a clear social opportunity, they can exert a determining influence. But they are often religiously illiterate. They are afraid of new truth—not without justification when one considers the nature of much arid and spiritually barren liberalism. They need effective and intelligent leadership and in the long run will respond to it.

Undoubtedly wide areas of the present churches will be unresponsive, will crowd back into their little ecclesiastical corners and die of inanition, while the major movements of human life pass by. So education, in the form of medieval scholasticism, died out, forgotten in the new light and life of the Renaissance. But education itself did not die. It rose transfigured with renewed power.

The attitude to which the religiously minded in our generation should be challenged is one of expectant vision and constructive activity for the church of the future. Already its germinal beginnings are evident. It is not concerned with sectarian divisions. It is hospitable to all who desire to live in the spirit of Jesus. It seeks no theological

uniformity among its members and uses no creed to regiment and regularize their opinions. It is thus free and unconstrained in its intellectual differences, not because it thinks that theological convictions are unimportant but because it thinks them so important that no artificial limitation should be put on liberty to think them out.

The church of the future will likewise be inclusively generous in welcoming many ways of worshipping. The liturgical service, the ministry of music, the stimulus of discussion, the instruction of preaching, the unprogrammed quiet of the Friends' Meeting, the beauty of dramatic symbolism—all will be used as media for making the Divine real to men.

Moreover, all the elevating interests of the community in particular and the world at large will be the concern of the church. If young people wish to dance, the church will feel responsible for such recreational need and for the atmosphere and spirit in which it is met. The books read, the plays and movies seen, the bringing up of children in the church's families, the philanthropies of the neighborhood, the play spaces of the city—everything

human that affects life will be the concern of the church, not one day in the week only but seven, not by way of external control but by way of co-operation and communal action. The church will be the focal point where the best public spirit of the community will gather.

To the building of such churches in our American communities this generation is challenged.

VIII

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT PRAYER

RUFUS M. JONES

RUFUS M. JONES

Born in Maine in 1863 of a long lineage of Quaker ancestry, Rufus Jones has never lost the imprint of his early environment, both physical and spiritual. A broad Yankee accent, a touch of the "rustic," and homely ways of life and speech mark him unmistakably as "a man from Maine," while every characteristic of thought and habit stamps him as a Friend. In three little books, *A Boy's Religion from Memory, Finding the Trail of Life* and *The Trail of Life in College,* he has given us among the most charming spiritual autobiographies of youth ever published, as well as exceedingly valuable psychological studies. His other writings include weighty and authoritative histories of Quakerism, biography, historical research, religious philosophy, interpretations of biblical heroes for youth, and many books of inspiration. But he is always happiest when his pen returns to the subject of prayer. Our recognized authority on the Society of Friends and possibly the foremost interpreter of mysticism in the English-speaking world, he never fails to lighten the problems of prayer with fresh insight drawn from both scholarship and personal experience.

From that simple background of Yankee boyhood, Rufus Jones emerged in 1882 to enter Haverford College where he graduated three years later. Already his interest was absorbed in philosophy and the religious traditions of his own people. There followed wide opportunities for graduate study at Haverford,

Heidelberg, University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, Oxford and Marburg. After a brief induction to the teaching profession as principal of a small school in Maine, he returned to his Alma Mater, Haverford, in 1893 and soon is to complete forty years of teaching in philosophy on her faculty. He holds many honorary degrees from American colleges and also from the University of Marburg. His published writings are altogether too numerous for complete enumeration. A selection of the books which are best known, both scholarly and popular, would include: *A Boy's Religion from Memory, Autobiography of George Fox, Social Law in the Spiritual World, Quakerism a Religion of Life, Studies in Mystical Religion, The Inner Life, St. Paul the Hero, The Boy Jesus and His Companions, Spiritual Energies in Daily Life, Fundamental Ends of Life, The Life and Message of George Fox, The Church's Debt to Heretics, Finding the Trail of Life, The Faith and Practice of the Quakers, New Studies in Mystical Religion.*

Not many years ago the London *Times* spoke of Rufus Jones as the greatest spiritual philosopher living in America since William James.

WHAT IT MEANS TO PRAY

BY RUFUS M. JONES

RELIGION is primarily and at heart the personal meeting of the soul with God and conscious communion with him. To give up the cultivation of prayer would mean in the long run the loss of the central thing in religion; it would involve the surrender of the priceless jewel of the soul. We might try in its stead to perfect the other aspects of religion. We might make our form of divine service very artistic or very popular; we might speak with the tongues of men and sing with the tongues almost of angels, but if we lose the power to discover and appreciate the real presence of God and if we miss the supreme joy of feeling ourselves environed by the Spirit of the living and present God, we have made a bad exchange and have dropped from a higher to a lower type of religion.

Prayer, no doubt, is a great deal more than this inner act of discovery and appreciation of God, but the joy of communion and intercourse with God

is the central feature of prayer and it is one of the most impressive facts of life.

The early Franciscans remained on their knees rapt in ardent contemplation praying with their hearts rather than with their lips. It was a prayer of quiet rather than a specific request. Francis thought of prayer as a time of storing up grace and power through union with God. He called it in his happy phrase, sharing the life of the angels—a needed preparation for the life of action and service which was to follow it.

Fortunately we do not need to *understand* vital processes and energies of life before we utilize them and start living by them. The child would die in unconscious infancy if he refused to turn to his mother's breast for nourishment until he had acquired a good working theory of the value and efficacy of mother's milk. Long before our modern laboratories succeeded in explaining why the combination of bread and butter is well adapted to be a staff of life for the race, primitive man hit upon it by some happy accident of the trial and error method, and had selected it out of a multitude of other possible combinations. We watch

with a kind of awe the marvelous accuracy of the homing instinct of birds and the guiding urge which brings the migratory fish from their winter feeding-grounds in the central deeps of the ocean back to the identical spawning place where their lives began. There are vital springs and life-urges in us all that baffle our capacity for analysis or rationalization, and the history of human development has revealed and demonstrated which of these subtle deep-lying forces and energies minister to the increase and furtherance of life and which ones must be checked and controlled as life marches forward from lower stages to higher levels.

One of these deep constructive energies of life is prayer. It is a way of life that is as old as the human race is, and it is as difficult to "explain" as is our joy over love and beauty. It came into power in man's early life and it has persisted through all the stages of it because it has proved to be essential to spiritual health and growth and life-advance. Like all other great springs of life, it has sometimes been turned to cheap ends and brought down to low levels, but on the whole it has

been a pretty steady uplifting power in the long story of human progress. The only way we could completely understand it would be to understand the eternal nature of God and man. Then we should no doubt comprehend why he and we seek one another and why we are unsatisfied until we mutually find one another.

The two dangers that always beset prayer and threaten to deaden or stifle its vitalizing power are (1) the danger of making prayer a utilitarian scheme, and (2) the danger of being caught in one of those thin rationalizing tendencies which recur frequently in human history, and, as a result, of having religious faith itself drop to a level of low potency.

The first danger has beset prayer in all generations. The *ego* aspect of life is very strong in the primitive stages of development as it is also in the early period of the formation of the child's aims and ideals. It was in every way natural that primitive man, as soon as he discovered that prayer was a real power, should have inclined to use it as an easy way to get the "things" he wanted, and especially that he should have used it as a magic method of

protection from the things he feared. This utilitarian aspect affects the early religion of almost all races and when once it has become embedded in the fundamental religious habits of a people it is extremely difficult to dislodge it. The result is that this note of self-seeking has formed a subtle over-tone in much of the world's praying, even when it has not been the major chord of it.

It is of all things important that prayer should be raised far above this short-cut scheme of self-seeking and of utilitarian aspirations. We have reached an ethical stage when we are slowly learning to dispense with the appeal of rewards and punishments as a religious motive. We feel, at least many of us feel, that it is a drop to lower religious levels, to endeavor to push a person toward religion by scaring him with the fear of hell or by emotionally moving him with vivid pictures of heavenly bliss. We want him to love God because of God's own grace and loveliness, not because he can *use* him for selfish ends, and we want him to turn to religion not because it is a path of safety from threatening danger, or a way to crowns and diadems, but because it is man's

noblest adventure and the way to the completest fulfillment of life's meaning and significance, and because it enables a man to become girded and equipped for the richest human service. So, too, prayer, if it is to be kept, as man moves up to higher ethical levels of life, must be sublimated from its lower and more egoistic traits and must be purified with a passion of love and cooperation.

The second danger is only too well known in this period through which we are passing. We are in the grip of a tremendous scientific current. The scientific method has been so successful in banishing mystery from the world and in organizing and controlling the forces of nature that we have easily assumed that there are no limits to its domain or to its sway. The authority of the laboratory has superseded all other types of authority. The method of explaining by antecedent "causes" is so direct and effective that it has made all other ways of interpretation seem weak and antiquated. Those who have become fascinated with the achievements and the triumphs of science have grown somewhat disillusioned over the less exact and less compelling methods of religion. Their

rationalized and casually explained world seems to need no God and to leave no place for Him.

It is, however, becoming pretty obvious that the successes of science are somewhat misleading. The practical effects are plain enough and they are real achievements. But when one asks how far science has been successful in making the universe rationally intelligible or in conserving those intrinsic values by which men live the answer halts. A modern writer, in *The Glass of Fashion,* has very soberly diagnosed human life as it is today in these words: "The present depression of humanity has its ground, I believe, solely in man's degraded sense of his origin. The human race feels itself like a rat in a trap. We began in mud and we shall end in mud. Life is reaching the end of its tether. Humanity rots for a new definition of life." I should prefer to say a new interpretation of life rather than a new "definition" of it, but that need not matter. The point of importance is that the scientific method has severe limits which are now plainly in evidence. It can only do what it is equipped to do and we ought not to expect the impossible of it. The attempt to find

antecedent causes for everything is bound to explain higher stages in terms of lower and simpler ones. We are bound to go back and back for our causes until we lose sight of our supreme values of life and find ourselves enmeshed in a mechanistic scheme of movements which has been substituted for the more vivid realities that we actually experience. And we find ourselves "explaining" by methods that do not in the end actually *explain* but really leave us with an endless causal regress—one "cause" in behind another "cause" all the way back. We are once more caught in one of those thin rationalization tendencies which work well up to a point but which leave us high and dry when we become concerned with the question of the deeper issues of life.

There is no solution for our present poverty of life or for our feebleness of vision except to wake up to the fact that methods of exact description and of causal explanation can apply only to certain parts and levels of our universe and that the values of life and the realities attaching to them call for quite a different way of approach. Already the tide has turned, the deeper currents of life are

circulating, and there are signs of a return to richer and more adequate ways of interpreting the values and spiritual issues of life. With these fresher discoveries will come new faith in God that will carry with it an increase in the reality and power of prayer.

Everybody who reads or studies psychology is ready to admit that the prayer of faith has at least a subjective effect, often to a profound degree. The soul's aspiration for purity of heart helps immensely to make the heart pure. The vivid suggestions of ideal aims, whether audibly uttered or only breathed as a wish *works* in almost marvelous fashion. There are high moments of faith when the whole being, including even the body and its functions, is extraordinarily responsive to interior suggestion. Any wish or hope of faith that rises to expression and which meets no contra-suggestion or inhibition is sure to be more or less creative and constructive in its effects. The period just before sleep begins or the time at waking is a moment when suggestion is peculiarly effective and dynamic, and so are moments of hush and silence in periods of corporate worship.

Noting the recognized fact of the extensive range of suggestion, its curative power and its moral effects, some modern students of the phenomena of prayer have been inclined to reduce it to a purely subjective aspect. They admit that prayer is a type of power, but that it works solely as a well-known form of auto-suggestion. I am quite ready to recognize the importance of this subjective aspect of prayer and I am thankful for it. We may well be grateful for all those features of life that can be brought under well-known laws and can be explained by principles with which we have grown familiar. But there is much involved in the experience and power of prayer that cannot be attributed to its subjective effects.

In the first place the subjective power of prayer would quickly wane and die away the moment prayer were actually reduced to that aspect of it. We can pray with dynamic effect on ourselves only when we pray with living faith in Something more than ourselves. When I become convinced that prayer is a *one-way* affair, a single-sided communication, I can no longer bring myself into the state of mind that makes it work

creatively. The power has oozed away and left me weak and ineffective. I can no longer close the circuit and set the current of power free. In order to make prayer work even in the sphere of my own life-area, I must rise to a faith in a Beyond. But that is by no means the only ground for a belief in the objective reality of prayer. Men have prayed in all generations and they have done so primarily because they have felt themselves to be in living relations with higher realities than themselves. They have prayed because they needed to pray as much as they needed to breathe or to eat. They have flung out their souls with the same kind of confidence that they had when they risked their bodies to the buoyant character of the water as they launched out to swim, and they found something happening in the process that refreshed and buoyed their souls. Praying is a life-creative method that has its own essential evidence in the act itself.

Clement of Alexandria, an uncanonized saint of the third century, who comes very close to being my ideal of a Christian man, thought of prayer as a "kind of divine mutual and reciprocal

correspondence." It is a double-sided operation, due to an attractive drawing power at work above us and at the same time to a homing tendency in us. We are so made that we cannot live as ego-centric beings. We are not contented with our success in conjugating the verb *to eat.* We natively reach out beyond our fragmentary selves for completion, and we aspire to find springs and sources of life of a wholly different order from our daily food and drink for the body.

That is, I think, where prayer *begins.* It is born of our need for spiritual fellowship. That kind of prayer would abide and last on, even if we ceased to have what might be called formal or conventional prayer and if we gave up asking God for desirable "things" of life. In our best moments of hush and quiet, especially in those high-tide occasions when many human hearts together are fused in silent communion, there often is a palpitating sense of divine presence, an overbrimming consciousness of healing, vivifying currents of life circulating underneath our little lives, and we are thereupon filled with joy and wonder. That is the very substance and essence of prayer as "mutual correspondence."

But prayer is both less and more than that. We all know only too well how easy it is to have prayer drop to a lower level than that of vital correspondence with God. We are, alas, very familiar with prayers which consist of words, words, words. The eyes are closed, the face is turned upward, God is addressed, but in every other particular the exercise belongs to this earthly world-order of events. Habits, prejudices, natural interests, the old, well-known stock of ideas, the familiar "patios of Canaan" get expression, but the heart is not on fire with a passion for something that is felt to be essential to life itself. The words are spoken because a prayer is expected at that time, or on that occasion. The newspaper report on a famous occasion of "the most eloquent prayer ever *addressed to a Boston audience*" is familiar to us, and it unconsciously reveals the essential weakness of much formal and conventional praying. It is intended for an audience rather than for God, and it lacks too often the quiver and urgency of the soul's sincere desire and overmastering need. It just wanders on.

It is a pity to see such a transcendent thrill of

life drop to a dull ordinary stream of talk, but it sometimes happens. "I hope you will not offer a very long prayer," a nervous University president said to me once as I was about to conduct a chapel service in his University, "the students will be sure to become restless and I cannot guarantee what they will do." My sympathy was all with the poor, long-suffering students, for I could easily visualize what they had endured before they reached the stage of protest and revolt. No persons are more quick to feel the note of reality than are college and university students.

So, too, prayer is, or may be, *more* than wordless and aimless communion and correspondence. It may and often does rise to a clear apprehension in thought and word of some experience or event or attainment that seems to be absolutely essential to life itself. The soul in its need throws itself unperplexed on God in a yearning of love and faith and confidence, and asks for what seems to be absolutely indispensable to its complete being. These goals toward which the soul strains forward in prayer, these yearning needs, are, however, by no means always selfish aims; on the

contrary, they usually are unselfish and stretch out to ends that mainly concern others. It is usually obvious enough that we can be of little service in the world to others unless we are raised in quality and power ourselves. But all great prayer is born out of intense earnestness and out of a consciousness that only God, through us as a feeble organ of His will, can accomplish what we seek and what we need.

> "From him who desireth greatly
> No wisdom shall be concealed.
> To him the future is present,—
> All secrets shall be revealed."

Prayer at its highest reach climbs up to a vicarious exercise of the soul. I mean by that somewhat abused word "vicarious," that we can, and do, lend our souls out as organs of love and suffering in fellowship-prayer for others who are in need of help and comfort. There are mysteries no doubt attaching to intercessory prayer which we cannot solve with our intellect or by our efforts at rationalization. So, too, there are unsolved mysteries connected with the radio-mechanism

which brings the voice of a friend from a distant city into our room where we sit tuning in to catch invisible vibrations. We do not wait until we can explain these energies before we use them, and so, too, there is no good reason why we should forego "lifting hands of prayer" for those who call us friends, until we completely understand how our human longing and our voice of prayer can affect the eternal divine Heart. If God is our great Companion, as we believe he is, then we and he are "bound together in one bundle of life," as a woman believed centuries ago when the world was younger. It may well be as philosophers and poets have said, that the whole round earth is bound in vital union with the life of God. In any case, we certainly must know much more than we know now before we have any proof that true prayer for others is vain and fruitless.

We may well feel hesitation, I think, in extending the range of prayer so as to include effects upon inanimate things. There are grave dangers in sight whenever prayer drops to a level that identifies it with a method of *magic*. The startling,

the spectacular, the marvelous, the miraculous, has always fascinated the primitive and the infantile mind, and probably always will do so, and it was of all things natural and to be expected that child-minded men would stretch after quick and easy ways of controlling nature, and of getting desired results by the use of sacred words and mighty phrases that were believed to have magical power over the nature divinities. Spiritual religion feels the degrading and superstitious character of all such tendencies and it moves away from them with a keen desire to employ only moral and spiritual methods in relation with the God who is Spirit and with a worship which must be in spirit and in truth to be real. Each person must of course in all these matters decide what for him is actually "in spirit and in truth."

Meantime those of us who pray have the best of all evidence that prayer is a vital breath of life, for we come back from it quickened and vitalized, refreshed and restored, and we are happy to believe and trust that our intercourse with the Companion of our lives has helped to fill with love

the cup which some friend of ours with agonizing hands was holding up in some hour of need.

"I, that still pray at morning and at eve,
Loving those roots that feed us from the past,
And prizing more than Plato things I learned
From that best academe, a mother's knee,
Thrice in my life, perhaps, have truly prayed,
Thrice, stirred below my conscious self, have felt
That perfect disenthralment which is God."[1]

[1] *James Russell Lowell, "The Cathedral."*

IX

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT THE CROSS

RICHARD ROBERTS

RICHARD ROBERTS

"Richard Roberts is a Welshman by birth, a mystic in his faith, and an analytical realist in his thought; he always gives one the impression of a man who has wrestled with the questions which fever men, but waited till the fevers were past." Rugged in mien, doggedly incisive in thinking, almost fierce in his exposure of unreality whether intellectual or ethical, yet almost boyish in his winsome Welsh fantasy, he has for many years been a most trusted guide of more thoughtful American students, and their elders. It is a characteristic of the man that his following is almost entirely among those who are determined to think, and to think hard. Further, it is characteristic of his thought that it returns ever and again to what is its deepest interest—the Cross. Most of his writing is an interpretation in one way or another of the meaning of that Event and that Principle which are to him at once the central facts in the Christian faith and the central insights into our whole existence. To think of Richard Roberts at his best is to anticipate a peculiarly fresh and burning and compelling treatment of the Cross. It is especially appropriate that this should be the subject assigned to him here; it is appropriate that he should have been the one asked to write of it.

Educated in his native Wales, Richard Roberts went from a notable pastorate in London to the Church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn, thence to the great pulpit of the American Church of Montreal,

and more recently to the Sherbourne Church in Toronto. Among the books by which he is best known are: *That One Face,* a study of Jesus in the writings of poets and prophets; *The Untried Door,* a searching critique of modern life in the light of the mind of Jesus; *The Gospel at Corinth,* an essay in expository preaching; *The Ascending Life,* a little book of thoughtful suggestion for the devotional life; *The Christian God* (the Merrick lectures at Ohio Wesleyan University in 1928); and, most recently, *The Spirit of God and the Faith of Today,* meditations on the meaning of Pentecost, published in 1930.

THE CROSS

BY RICHARD ROBERTS

THE late Sir Cecil Spring Rice said in a speech —it was soon after his retirement from the British Embassy in Washington—that "the Cross is a sign of patience under suffering, but not of patience under wrong." Sir Cecil was a man of insight who read the signs of the times with singular understanding; but on this occasion he was as completely at fault as a man could be. For the abiding significance of the cross is just that it was the supreme instance of patience—and something more—under wrong. The world had no need of the spectacle of patience under suffering. That story had been told once for all in the Book of Job. But the world did need the spectacle of the patience and the victory of love in the face of wrong. And that was what it might have seen in the cross. Some day it will see it and lay it to heart. But it is plainly a difficult lesson to learn—since even so sensitive a spirit as Cecil Spring Rice could, at this time of day, miss it.

It would be difficult to describe with any pre-

cision the impression that Jesus made upon his first disciples. Perhaps we may say that they recognized a certain *essential rightness* in Jesus. I put it in this vague fashion because I know of no better way of putting it. Matthew looked at him and said, "That's the man for me. I am going after him." His moral insight divined what I have described as the "essential rightness" of Jesus. The merchantman seeking goodly pearls came upon the pearl of great price and recognized it on the spot; and it was in a similar fashion that the disciples discovered Jesus. And in much the same way, men discover him still. It is stranger than fiction that even in the mere story of his life, Jesus still casts this spell over men. Here is H. W. Massingham, great soul and one of the bravest journalists of our time, toward the end of his life, making a fresh study of Jesus. And here is his report of it: "Going back to the Bible, and with the aid of modern criticism, simplifying the story of His life, as the imaginative reader loves to simplify it, I saw that it was elemental stuff and that out of it was made all the goodness I have ever come in contact with." *Ele-*

mental stuff, please observe. That is Massingham's way of saying what I have called "essential rightness." It is Massingham's way of saying, "That's the man for me."

Massingham looked upon Jesus with moral insight. There are, to be sure, other insights, intellectual, æsthetic, practical. But when men turn any of these insights on Jesus, they see the same thing, his "essential rightness." J. Middleton Murry turns upon him the poetic insight—he says, too, "That's the man for me." Jesus is the supreme poetic genius. William Blake and Shelley had found that same thing out for themselves a century and more earlier. And so it has come to pass that men have called Jesus the supreme prophet, the supreme poet, the supreme teacher, the supreme reformer, the supreme gentleman, the supreme working man. And Bruce Barton seems to have discovered in him the supreme business man. I am not now going to inquire into the ultimate significance of this circumstance. I wish to point out, merely, that a person who can be placed in all these categories must be more than any or all of them; that there must be some other category

that embraces them all, and that it has only one member, namely, Jesus.

I am for the moment only concerned with the essential rightness of Jesus in its ethical aspect; and since the limits of this article do not allow me to do otherwise, I invite you to look at once upon this unique personality in the moment of its supreme crisis. Now the thesis I am about to lay down rather abruptly is one that can be verified easily by a study of the gospel narrative and an effort toward an imaginative understanding of it. It is this: that when you come to the cross you find yourself in the presence of something like an absolute ethical antithesis. In our human conflicts and crises we are never confronted by issues of simple right and wrong: there are endless cross currents and confusions of motive. Our choices have to be made not between black and white, but between shades of grey. But on the cross—and nowhere else—we find the contrast stark and absolute, black against white, midnight against midday, with no twilight zone. On the one side is the essential rightness of Jesus; on the other the forces that were bent on destroying

him. That is what the writer of the Fourth Gospel meant when he said, "Now is the judgment [the *crisis*] of this world," and that still holds. For the cross forces even to this hour a moral choice on man and societies. For there the eternal antithesis of right and wrong is focused down into one terrific apocalypse.

Now, I cannot here undertake to analyze this antithesis. It will be enough if here and now I suggest the way the analysis should take. There are personalities in the scene who are symbolical of "this world's unspiritual gods"—Barabbas, the preacher and practitioner of political violence; Pilate, the guardian of civil peace at any price; Herod, the idol of the fast set; Annas and Caiaphas, the crafty protagonists of vested interests; and the same old crowd that we know so well—ignorant, gullible, easily led by the nose, and fooled into shouting the catchword of the moment. Just the same violent, shrewd, vicious, selfish, stupid world that we have with us still. And over against all this, the antithesis of it at every point—Jesus. Brood a little over this, and my point will become quite obvious.

However you try finally to explain the phenomenon of Jesus, one thing will stand: Jesus is the crown of manhood, the "C major" of the human race. Edward Caird refers to God as a "self-determining principle which manifests itself in a development which includes nature and man." That is indeed hardly more than a truism if we are going to take the religious view of the world; and that I take not to be in question between us here. But I would add to it the two words, "and Jesus." By which I mean that God manifests his own moral character, his own "righteousness," supremely and uniquely in what I have called the essential rightness of Jesus; and that in the cross by reason of the stupendousness of the event, that righteousness is declared entire, once for all. In other words, the essential rightness of Jesus, unclouded and uncompromised, on the cross is the revelation of the moral mind of God and therefore of the moral order of the universe. It is the abiding touchstone of right and wrong.

But at the cross you have right and wrong face to face. And what does right say to wrong? It is plain to see what wrong is doing to right: it is

endeavoring to stamp it out. And what is right's reaction? It is a word of forgiveness for the wrongdoer. I am not going to dwell upon this: it is a moment before which one has to bow one's head in wondering and worshipping silence. Its point for us is, if our argument so far is sound, that the first reaction of God to human wrongdoing is unconditional forgiveness. I say "unconditional forgiveness" because I want here and now to make clear, first, that there is no bargain, no payment, no satisfaction, no propitiation, involved in the divine forgiveness of the sinner; and second, that God does not wait for our repentance before he forgives. He forgives in order to provoke our repentance.

Upon this question of forgiveness there are two things to be said. First, that forgiveness is of sinners rather than of sin. In a sense the sin committed cannot be forgiven—there is a principle of continuity in the moral order which secures infallibly that what a man sows that shall he reap, that the sin of the father is visited upon the children. For the sin done in the mind or in the body we shall pay to the uttermost farthing.

The entail of sin is never cut; but it does not go on for ever. The time comes when it works itself out. Second, that forgiving the sinner does not mean letting him off the consequences of his sin; it is restoring him to a footing of rightness with God; it is reconciliation: and therefore, it is giving him a fresh start—all this implying that his disposition to sin may be checked and annulled. Forgiveness is the healing of a broken relationship; it is God's way of turning the enemy into a friend.

But perhaps it will be said that all this talk of sin is beside the point. Nowadays we have grown out of it. Well, it may be true that theological disquisition on sin has made it somewhat unreal. But we had better not fool ourselves just here. There *is* right and wrong; no psychology can ever alter *that*. It is certainly true that the line which separates right things from wrong things has not always been drawn in the same place; there is always a no-man's-land between the two. But that the broad distinction of right and wrong exists, only a man or woman who is playing with life will deny. There are some things we know

to be wrong—excessive self-indulgence, cruelty, cheating, bootlegging—these things are wrong and cannot even take whitewash; and on the other hand, kindness, self-control, courtesy, forgiveness—these are always and eternally right. And the cross is still in the world to tell us that love to the uttermost, even of enemies, the forgiveness of injuries, and honor toward the highest are the power and the wisdom of God for the life of man. It stands on our skyline as the abiding criterion of character and behavior; it forces men to the supreme moral choice—whether they stand on this side or that. But it also tells them that there is room and welcome for those on that side who choose to come over to this.

X

WHAT I BELIEVE—ABOUT ETERNAL LIFE

DAVID R. PORTER

DAVID R. PORTER

For more than twenty years David Porter has given himself to the service of the youth of America in our preparatory schools and colleges. As the Executive Secretary of the Student Division of the Y. M. C. A. he heads a movement whose membership includes more than two hundred thousand college students in the Christian Associations of some seven hundred universities and colleges in every corner of the land. Each year his administrative responsibilities take him into almost every State and into intimate contact with many hundred students of every age and type. It is probable that he knows the colleges of America and their life more thoroughly than any other man.

Somewhat retiring, always self-depreciatory, he creates a first impression of quiet strength which closer association abundantly confirms. In the ever-baffling, ever-alluring ebb and flow of student religious interest, David Porter has maintained an unswerving faith in the American undergraduate. Throughout his service among them, his steady ideal has been the development of a genuinely democratic student leadership—an ideal which he has seen increasingly realized in the present Student Christian Movement, very largely student-initiated, student-determined, student-led.

Like Rufus Jones, David Porter was born and schooled in Maine. Like Professor Jones, he still carries unmistakable marks of a simple, wholesome

Yankee background in habits of both thought and speech. On graduation from Bowdoin College in 1906 he was awarded a Rhodes scholarship and spent his period of study abroad at Trinity College, Oxford. On his return to this country, he immediately became associated with the Young Men's Christian Association Movement, first in connection with their work with boys, then as the organizer of the work in the preparatory and high schools and, latterly, as the executive of the work with college men. He is a member of the General Committee of the World's Student Christian Federation and was for many years chairman of the editorial board of the *Intercollegian,* the magazine of the Student Christian Movement. He is the compiler of two anthologies, one of verse and one of prayers—*Poems of Action,* and *The Enrichment of Prayer;* and the editor of a number of symposiums to which he is also a contributor—*The Church in the Universities, Dynamic Faith,* etc.

WHAT OF LIFE AFTER DEATH?

BY DAVID R. PORTER

At first sight the problem of continuing life after death may seem to be to youth no live problem at all. It is a time for life, not for death; the period of entering most fully into the active, engrossing, thrilling succession of experiences which existence itself seems to afford. The year is at the spring and the day is at the morn; why should we give a single thought to the harvest period of life and its Grim Reaper? Yet a moment of reflection, and such come to every human—and the thoughts of youth are often "long, long thoughts," —reminds us that we are never really far removed from facing all of life's ultimate questions, including death and that to which it may open the door. A severe illness; a telegram calling us to a funeral of some one whose name is written on our hearts; the necessity for a fraternity mate to leave college because of a suicide caused by business worries—in any number of ways we may be brought face to face with the question whether

life continues after death or terminates "like a rocket, which, once its cascade of stars has been displayed, has fulfilled its function and falls back unregarded into the surrounding gloom." For others, especially the intellectually inquisitive, college studies may bring the acute facing of the meaning of all of life and whether or not a quality of spirit can be achieved which endures beyond mere physical change and decay.

It should not necessarily be regarded as a grievous fault that youth does not more frequently or seriously contemplate such questions as the after-life. One would ardently approve such an attitude rather than that of those who are constantly interfering with today's duties and enjoyments with anxious concern about the ultimate questions. "Prepare to die" has been the counsel which only too often has detracted the attention of people from an effective dealing with burning issues affecting the immediate common good. While it is extremely important for all to achieve true views about death, we shall see that our most urgent question must be in regard to the quality and the dynamic of our present life of the Spirit.

This is no new question. Ever since the race of men began, each individual, high and low, rich or poor, has sooner or later come face to face with the question of death and what may come after. Amidst the innumerable and often conflicting views which have developed, where shall we find the authentic word of truth? To the present writer at least it seems perfectly clear that Jesus Christ and he only has such a word to declare. Aside from him we have no dependable assurance of personality continuing beyond the disintegration of this physical body. He is our guide to life, to all life, and to all of life; to life before death and to life after death. He has brought life and immortality to light.

This does not mean that all the Bible teaching on the question of life after death is clear or compelling. In the Bible there is not one teaching but several. The Hebrews before Jesus' time seem to have held quite definite views about this subject; there was to be a great day of the Lord when all the dead were to pass through a resurrection process. The pagan world was full of teachings about this matter and sometimes in the New Testament

and even more in the practices which have been continued in organized religion there are traces of pagan influence. But Jesus' central teaching was quite clearly that eternal life is a matter of the here-and-now; that to those who come into abiding fellowship with the Father there is discovered an enduring experience which nothing, not even death, can destroy. Quite calmly he thought of his own death as furnishing an opportunity to help others continue their real life in another room of the "Father's house." By this view there is no long wait in the tomb from which later the physical body will be raised; death and resurrection are but the opposite sides of the same process. Death and resurrection, being one simultaneous act, are like the swinging door between two rooms in both of which life, real life, is continuous and which may be of the high spiritual quality which Jesus called eternal. Not *everlastingness* of life, necessarily, but *quality* of life is the important thing, both now and hereafter. There seems no doubt that Jesus faced his own death without a shadow of question of his continuing existence and the continuing power of fellowship and of satisfying work with

his comrades. Life in one room was to be continued immediately in an adjoining room.

This view of the continuity of life seems never before to have been brought before the attention of men. Absolutely certain is it that Jesus first made the idea "current coin." Ever since his day uncounted multitudes of men and women have found intellectual and spiritual satisfaction in this conception, calmly confident that he was entirely correct in his view of the incidental character of death. Regardless of how we may choose to fill in the details of the story, his own career was not terminated by his own death. He kept on and still keeps on working mightily in the actual experience of men. "History can show nothing similar to this emergence of an original and unconquerable spiritual life—the Christian society, in short—from the belief, held by a few score of men and women, that God had omnipotently vindicated his dear Son, and that the renewed and glorified presence of Jesus among them had unsealed a fount of infinite moral power." [1]

There are aspects of this question of life con-

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *The Originality of the Christian Message* pp. 88, 89.

tinuing through and beyond death that are difficult to support with proof which all will regard as irrefutable. Like all fundamental problems there are conflicting views. Like certain other positions upheld in this book, it is hard to prove. On the other hand, and this is very important, it is even harder to disprove. In such a case no one can be blamed if he resolves to cling to and uphold the view which seems to him on the whole most credible and seems to produce the values most contributory to richness of life. Each must decide for himself what evaluation to give to the experience that life brings in its pathway. In his great novel *Joseph Vance* William de Morgan pictures his hero walking along the street when through an open window Joseph hears piano music. Someone was playing the Waldstein Sonata by Beethoven. Listening, Joseph experienced that sort of persuasion which comes by some direct authentication to the heart and he said there was something in that music "which proves the immortality of the soul." We cannot overlook the fact that to those who have come to share most completely Jesus' point of view toward life there has come a conviction, like his,

that for death to terminate man's career was unthinkable. I do not find anywhere else a like conviction and assurance; except for him it is hard to take other than an agnostic position.

Let us now turn our attention to certain considerations which seem to offer reinforcement to the view that life continues through and after death. We will not of course overlook the fact that there are certain contemporary views of personality which try to prove the inseparability of the inner self from the physiological organism. If these views are accepted they cut all the ground away from any argument for the persistence of the self after death. Here again we must make our choice and we choose to stand with those who hold that there are facts of consciousness, of thought, which self-observation can validate and which are as solid as the facts of mathematics or physics.[1]

For one thing it is easier to believe that values are of enduring significance than it is to believe that they are created at such infinite cost only to be obliterated. The highest level of life is the level of values. Up through the varying levels of animal

[1] *e.g.*, see E. W. Lyman, *The Meaning of Selfhood and Faith in Immortality*, p. 4 ff.

life we come at last to man. As organic life is above inorganic matter and as the conscious life of man is above the level of animal life, so the life of values stands high above the ordinary conscious life of man. Here is a level of life—a "realm," contemporary scholars tell me—where values are realized. Beauty, truth, goodness, love, self-dedication to causes—all are as real as anything that can be examined in test tubes and crucibles; they are as real as the lime and iron and phosphorus in our physical organisms. They are the most precious things that life affords. What a shameful waste if they are to be destroyed! In all the rest of the universe we do not find such annihilation. Even energies like light and electricity are preserved. Does it not seem natural to suppose that the highest values are likewise preserved; that the most dynamic energy—the creative personality—continues its existence?

At this point some say that such existence is possible in a general social sense only. But values do not exist aside from self-consciousness. If personality in some sense does not continue as an enduring element in the universe, then the values

themselves will ultimately disappear. The time will come, we are told, when the sun will be a great ball of ice and human life in that distant day will cease from our earth. If there be no personal immortality then nothing will survive which men have created or become. "Believing as I do," says Darwin in an oft-quoted sentence, "that man in the distant future will be a far more perfect creature than he now is, it is an intolerable thought that he and all other sentient beings are doomed to complete annihilation after such long-continued slow progress." We are bound to share his "intolerable thought." The universe can have no meaning if the best and highest values are brought, at the end, to extinction.

Another factor which points to the continuance of personality after death is similarly sensed from what we know of life's development before death. The higher we go in the process of evolution the more are we conscious of the development of personalities which possess inner individuality and a capacity for creativity. This tendency of life to manifest itself through such personalities is what Canon Streeter has called "the individualizing

principle." This is so marked that there is at least measurable evidence that the personality can act independently of the body; that much at least can be said for the very intermittent progress that can yet be reported from telepathic experiments. If in the range of life as we know it there seems to be an irresistible pull toward more original and more creative individuals, and if such individuals seem, in some measure at least, to manifest themselves independently of the physiological organism, it suggests the probability that the decay of the body will not frustrate the continuity of the real self.

Something, too, must be made of the widespread persistence of a belief in personal immortality. Among all classes of people at all periods of the race's life has been found this anticipation of a life after physical death. It will be pointed out at once that at the present time there are not a few who refuse to give place to that anticipation. Some have not found life satisfying on this side of the grave and they have no desire to go on. It is not surprising that people who are cynical or disillusioned or who have persistently yielded themselves to the pleasures of animal existence with no appreciation

of truth, love, beauty and devotion to causes, should feel no pull to the perpetuation of life after death. Their disbelief must not be taken too seriously: we do not take our estimate of the colors of a sunset from one who is color-blind. It is among men and women who are most sensitive to life on the highest levels that there comes the greatest inner conviction that such a life is not ended by death. It is proved by experience too good not to be true. Their actual participation in the life of the spirit gives them unshakable proof that Jesus was right in his belief that death is merely an incident in an ever-developing, ever-enriching Life.

No one with a sense of honor could recognize the validity of a desire for continuing existence (as some used to teach) on the ground that meritorious living must have a reward. Goodness is an end in itself and needs no reward. But such a desire may be a noble thing if it awakens ambition to continue working at the creative tasks which give life its present significance. Intuitively we refuse to believe that a universe ruled by a loving Father will not offer other and ampler fields of usefulness. "So much to do; so little done," was the dying thought

of a great empire builder, Cecil Rhodes. So much to do and continuing chances for effective action is a Christian conviction. Jesus dying in his youth would be an illustration of essential injustice—unless he were right in his confidence that he was going on to do greater work.

"But were He man,
And death ends all; then was that tortured death
On Calvary a thing to make the pulse
Of memory quail and stop."

What are the effects in life of an assurance that our inner self is to become an enduring part of the universe, that death for the body means at that instant resurrection of the spirit for unhindered activity and usefulness?

It gives not only a heightened evaluation of ourselves but also of all other persons. If persons have achieved or are capable of achieving that quality of satisfying and creative life which Jesus called eternal, then they are of all values the most valuable. They become ends and must never be means to ends. Friendship takes on a new and deeper meaning. On a long journey I value true friendship with my fellow voyagers; on a ferry boat I

do not trouble to make their acquaintance. A belief in life after death tends to give us the most worthy view of the nature of man and of his high destiny.

It gives a more adequate conception of who God is and where he manifests himself. We could hardly maintain an exalted view of God if he were incapable of preserving the values which life at its richest shows to us. We discover God best as we discover the best ways, especially the best personal ways in which he is revealed and mediated. God cannot be less good than Jesus, who was convinced himself and has kept on convincing multitudes that values are preserved, that life is continuous, that, as he said, God is a God of the living—of the living before death and also of those who keep on living when death opens the door into the next room. God becomes a living God.

It gives the best assurance of a new social order. If each human life is of such infinite significance, then injustice, preventable disease and needless poverty must be done away. Jesus taught a revolutionary corollary of this new evaluation of persons—we must treat men as brothers. If God

scrapped men at death when they had become best qualified to live the richest life, then we could scrap men any day. As a matter of fact, social life has been nearest to brotherly where men have shared Jesus' view of man's immortality. And, where things are persistently unbrotherly, followers of Jesus have been amazingly able to cling to one other absolutely essential ingredient of any social readjustment—Hope.

It helps us to face today's tasks and disciplines with fortitude and a high sense of meaning. What I do at any moment takes on an eternal quality. Something new and otherwise lacking comes into life. St. Paul used a striking figure to express his conviction about the revolutionary change that he had found Jesus bringing into the experience of man. "He brought life," he said, "and immortality to light." By what he taught about death and by what he did with death he has thrown more light on this universal problem than all other teachers combined. He showed that life is a continuous, growing, dynamic thing in which death is a mere incident on the endless way. Our questions about how to die become then questions about how to

live. Not speculating about and fearing the future, but unreserved participation in today's tasks should be our central concern. A hymn we often sing at funerals is "Lead, Kindly Light." There is good reason for singing it then. But it was not written as a funeral hymn. John Newman, an Oxford student at eighteen, becalmed on a Mediterranean sailing vessel, puzzled about his life work, then wrote the lines of the hymn. Whether at the close of this life's day of work or just at the opening of it, his counsel is authentically Christian:

"I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me."

CONCLUSION

THE RESOURCES OF RELIGION

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

Since his student days at Princeton where he was Chairman of the Undergraduate Council, President of the Philadelphian Society, Valedictorian and member of Phi Beta Kappa, Henry Van Dusen has been one of the most influential religious leaders of the "younger generation." After two years as secretary of the Philadelphian Society he went abroad in 1921 to pursue his studies at New College, Edinburgh and Edinburgh University. In 1924 he received the B.D. degree *Summa Cum Laude* from Union Theological Seminary in New York City. From that time until 1926 he was engaged in college and conference addresses on the moral and religious problems of students. This service, equally marked by its persuasive clarity and its enthusiastic reception by students and professors in all parts of the country, was but partially modified when in the autumn of 1927 he became Acting Executive Secretary of the Student Division of the Y. M. C. A. during the first difficult year of its reorganization and enlargement. Since 1928 Mr. Van Dusen has been giving full time to his duties as Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology and the Philosophy of Religion at Union Theological Seminary, to which position he was appointed in 1927.

In addition to many articles which have come from his pen with amazing regularity, Mr. Van Dusen has published one book, *In Quest of Life's Meaning,* now entering its second edition, and collaborated with Dean Thomas W. Graham in *The Story of*

Jesus. The measure of his present influence may be judged by the following positions which he now holds: Fellow, National Council on Religion in Higher Education; Editorial Council, *The World Tomorrow;* Board of Managers, Bowery Branch and Intercollegiate Branch of the Y. M. C. A. in New York City; National Student Committee Y. M. C. A.; Board of Directors Philadelphian Society; Executive Committee of the Committee on Militarism in Education.

While possessing rare qualities of administrative leadership, it is chiefly as a sympathetic, helpful and loyal friend that Henry Van Dusen is known and beloved by thousands of American students and alumni.

THE RESOURCES OF RELIGION

BY HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

It is characteristic of discussions of religion to conclude with the question of power. I have never known a conference of college students draw to its close without an urgent request for an address on "the sources of power."

Our final query in matters religious is not "what?" or "why?" but "how?" Whenever we are most honest we recognize that knowledge far outruns practice. The most earnest and pressing inquiry of our spirits is not, "What should I believe?" or "What should I do?" or even, "Why should I so live?" but, "How *can* I live as I know I should?" Men's most urgent demand of religion concerns the way to greater insight and power.

Further, a persistent conviction suggests that our lives are capable of far greater power than they now possess. Most of us live constantly under the sense of genuine but unfulfilled possibilities. Hence, rather than from the cruelty of life or the

impersonality of the world of Nature, rises the sad melancholy tinged with cynicism which shadows many spirits. To be sure, some of our expectations of life are quite unreal, the chimerical dreams of youth. We are better rid of them, however painful the process. But of others a deep intuition tells us that it is not so. They represent truth, our real selves, the divine purpose for us. An eminent psychologist states his conviction "that we are living far below the limits of our possible selves, and that there are open to us resources of power available through the right use of our instincts which, if directed to noble purposes, will free our minds from those worries, anxieties and morbid fatigue which spoil our lives, and will free us for a life of energy and strength."[1] We long for such an increment of power beyond our present life.

To all such inquiries, two answers are given, apparently contradictory, but each in some sense true. On the one hand, we are told that no power is to be found apart from the natural and normal processes of life; the power we seek is already

[1] J. A. Hadfield, *The Psychology of Power*, p. 52.

within us; it is to be won by no appeal to supernatural agency or dependence upon mysterious extrahuman resources; all the power which is available will come through our habitual life and work. But a second voice no less confidently makes reply: —at every moment of our lives there is possible for us power far beyond our own capacities; the power we need is outside us; it must come from beyond in a unique and quite definite way. The issue is largely unreal. Whether the power we seek is released from within or seems to come as an incursion from without makes little difference; the point is that it is something beyond our present lives, beyond the self-of-the-moment. We turn to religion for resources—call them "supernatural" or "supernormal" or what you will. Clearly, they are "superusual," far beyond our present achievement.

Two preliminary words deserve to be said. It is clear that resources should never be sought for their own sake, apart from some specific purpose. Therefore, it is exceedingly important to know precisely what we seek. The way to power will vary

according to the kind of power we wish. And the kind of power desired will depend upon the particular need we are set to meet. The scholar preparing a report of far-reaching scientific import needs the maximum resource available, but the power he needs is of intellectual concentration, heightened insight, cool and impersonal thought. The young person confused in purpose, pulled here and there by impulses he is not able to weigh or interpret, needs the maximum resource available, but the power he needs may be the guidance of common-sense wisdom, restraint rather than encouragement, not increase but direction of the already superabundant energies of life. But the derelict on the Bowery, his personality in fragments, impotent to muster an ounce of energy in his own behalf, who drifts half-crazed with drink into a Rescue Mission, desperately needs power but of a far different order than the others. The way to power depends upon the kind of power we need.

One further word by way of preface—a twofold warning. *We can never judge power in ourselves by an external or easy standard, especially by how we feel.* Frequently we are the poorest judges of the worth of our own life. And the "feelings" of relig-

ion are especially deceptive. How often we turn from high exaltation when we have seemed to sense the power of religion coursing through us to become impatient, irritable, flagrantly blind to another's need! How often, when the resources of life seemed to ebb, meager and turgid, have we discovered long afterward that virtue flowed from us quite beyond our own best abilities! And, *we cannot judge power in ourselves by the opinion of others.* Surely, the judgment of the contemporary world on the failure of Jesus should be sufficient reminder that there may be no more deceptive guide than the praise or blame of others. The healing of the finest influence—the kind of resource we most desire for our life—works its way too subtly for casual apprehension or easy measurement.

What can we say of pathways to the resources of religion? Let us examine four[1]:

1. *The way of honest inquiry.*

I would want to state with all possible emphasis

[1]The following suggestions are based in part on "Ways to the Discovery of Religion" in the *Message of the Student Christian Association Movement*, Association Press, 1928.

my conviction that the mind fearlessly set to wrestle with the perplexities and confusions life presents to us is on the way toward tapping the resources of religion. Traditionally, the God of religion is represented as a God of truth *and* power. By a strange paradox, the lovers of truth have tended to find themselves ranged apart from and in opposition to the seekers of spiritual power. The easy certainty of power-bringing religion is thought to endanger the integrity required in the honest quest for truth. Conversely the critical spirit is thought to make impossible a genuine experience of religion. The difficulty springs from the over-assurance of self-confident religion on the one hand, from an inadequate interpretation of the search for truth on the other hand. The intellectual quest, if truly conducted, will lead life to wisdom and, because wisdom is itself an avenue of power, to the power of religion.

But few of us know what honest intellectual inquiry is. A sharp statement and one that will arouse immediate resentment, but it is true. Most of us in this modern day are trained not to think truly but to think cleverly. And clever thought is not honest intellectual inquiry.

No better example of the difficulties for honest thought could be suggested than the intellectual life of our colleges. Take class-work and examinations. As the student sits in examination, what is controlling his writing—the honest quest for light, or the desire to make grades, to spread scanty knowledge so as to appear as impressive as possible, to turn back the kind of information which experience teaches is most wanted and in the form which is known to be most acceptable? To ask the question seems gratuitous. Academic work may be the poorest possible preparation of the mind for finding truth. Or, take college debating. Usually, its real purpose is not to reveal truth, but to win arguments. I sometimes think debating has turned out more minds absolutely unqualified for life's great enterprise of truth-seeking than almost anything else I know. It is great for sharpening wits, but what more? More serious, take the general intellectual atmosphere of our contemporary life of culture. The premium is on brilliance and cleverness, wit rather than wisdom. There is such fascination in the intellectual game. It is comparatively easy to bluff wisdom one does not possess. Once the bluff is successful, one readily forgets

that it was a bluff. Then one is well set on the path to that cultured sophistication which makes the tedious and disciplined inquiry after truth impossible.

There are certain marks of the genuine seeker after truth. Almost always he can be detected—by the very tone of his voice in discussion, by a quick recognition of the incompleteness of his own discovery of truth, by readiness to admit new light, above all by an eagerness to launch forth experimentally on any new truth glimpsed, verifying his discoveries in his own experience. These at least would seem to be necessary conditions of honest inquiry:

a. A mind sufficiently able and sufficiently well trained to grapple with the particular problems under consideration.

b. Some knowledge of the issues and of what others have thought of them; this implies historical perspective and the wide reading through which it comes.

c. An adequate search for help; consultation with those, our contemporaries and thinkers

of the past, who might throw light on our perplexities.

d. Readiness to lay aside fondly cherished prejudices and to admit mistakes before new light.

e. Eagerness to test fresh truth in our own living at whatever cost.

f. Determination to see the quest through to the end.

Those who do not possess such equipment need not think themselves excluded from truth; the most significant truths about life reveal themselves to simplicity and sincerity rather than to richly furnished intelligence. But those who are drawn to the purely intellectual enterprise will need such equipment. Honest inquiry, fulfilling these conditions, must guide life toward religion's truth and religion's strength.

2. *The way of worship.*

Of all the dilemmas with which life confronts us, none is more puzzling than that between preoccupation and detachment. There is that in life

which is forever urging us to throw ourselves completely into the immediate situation. The attractive fellowship of friends, our gregarious impulses, fear of inner loneliness which increases as life advances, the concrete challenge of immediate tasks —all call life to an intense and useful preoccupation. But there is that in life also, something very deep which seems to flow from the funded experience of the past, which forever warns against a too complete involvement and counsels detachment. Preoccupation saps life's energies and drains it of the power we are seeking. Its more serious disservice is that, by busying hand and brain with the project of the moment, it obscures other and more important things. It warps perspective, foreshortens vision, befuddles thinking and dulls insight. Worship is the guardian against these dangers of the too-active life; it is the highest use of the detachment required by life.

The mature religious life is increasingly individual in its sources, increasingly inclusive in its expression. The great values of fellowship with its rich gifts are never lost. But less and less does it look to others for guidance. More and more are

its insights and its resources drawn from solitude. Increasingly the light for its life's path is found in the inner spiritual experience, in personal meditation and prayer. There are grave dangers in this fact; they are only too apparent. But it is the law of the developing spiritual life. And the other side of the matter is, that from solitude the mature religious spirit emerges with an ever-clearer vision for the life of the world. Problems are discovered which were overlooked before. All of society is viewed in wider perspective. The sense of social responsibility grows. Every aspect of life is seen standing in need of religion's standards and religion's power. People's true motivations, both worthy and unworthy, are recognized for what they are. Personal purpose is purified and life is prepared to cast itself beyond any dictate of caution or self-interest in the remaking of society's life. "That which chiefly marks the religious soul is a fearless and original valuation of things. Its judgments emerge somehow from solitude, as if it had resources and data sufficient to determine its attitudes without appeal to the bystander, as if by fresh contact with truth itself, it were sure of its

own justice."[1] Mature religion is increasingly personal in its roots and increasingly social in its fruits.

The best method for the life of worship must be largely a matter of personal discovery. One suggestion may be offered—the generous use of experiment. Those to whom prayer is hardly more than word-saying may find it helpful to set apart some spot which may be kept fairly free from other uses for a few minutes of private worship each day. It may be of use to hang there a portrait of Christ or a simple wooden cross or a picture of special meaning. Nearby may be set a table with candles or flowers or favorite books of devotion. At least once each day sit or kneel at that place, and using the cross or picture as an aid to imagination, spend a few moments in reading, meditation, and prayer. Let that spot be to you a miniature sanctuary. In a world whose interests are so largely pagan and whose atmosphere is so largely secular, we need the aid of a place where we can unfailingly create spiritual associations. Those who so establish for themselves a focus for personal

[1] W. E. Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, p. 28.

worship will find gradually forming within their lives an inner sanctuary which requires no external symbols. They will find it possible to make of any spot, however unfavorable, a place of genuine worship.

The most helpful technique for worship each must discover for himself. But the results which should be expected from worship, the norms by which it may be tested, can be suggested:

Worship should bring *wisdom*. What a searching test to put to it! No mere emotionalism, however inspiring or pleasurable, which slows mental processes and dulls insight; no meaningless and archaic rote which beclouds rather than clarifies men's integrity of mind; no escape from the true and deep facts of life—hard facts they often are—through mystical elevation. True worship should be an aid to clearer thinking, and in two ways. First, by preparing the mind to think quietly, honestly, and the spirit to face truth eagerly, courageously; secondly, by presenting to the mind through the content of worship itself unrecognized truth about ourselves, our families, our work, our neighbors, our church, our world, and presenting it with sug-

gestion and clarity peculiarly fitted to gain acceptance.

Worship should communicate *vision*—the lifting of sight above preoccupation with the petty things of life, the portrayal of broader perspectives and deeper meanings, the stimulus to imagination which makes religion's unique insight possible.

Worship should minister to *self-understanding*—through stimulating honesty of mind, sensitivity of spirit, fearless passion for full truth, faith in oneself.

Worship should effect *purification*—so presenting the mirror to life that failure can be faced, wrong repented or forgiven; so bringing life into the cleansing power of a Presence which is at once immovable truth and immeasurable love that it emerges purged and whole.

Worship should nurture *faith*—such confidence in oneself, in comrades, in the possibility of progress, in the unchanging God as makes life wholly different—faith which breeds courage and through courage accomplishment.

Worship should impel *resolution*—the daring

and full gift of self which translates the visions and high desires of the spirit into the stuff of the world's life.

Worship should furnish *power*—receiving those spiritually ill from disappointment, perplexity, loneliness, defeat, failure, and sending them forth with each peculiar need met by its own peculiar healing. This is the final test of worship, both of its genuineness and of its value. "Some superabundance there is in the vision of God which sends the seer back not to the old but to the new; not with a release from old grievances, but with something like a hunger for pain and difficulty. The edge of the tool of the will is restored and it is eager for world-making. The man is able to fight, to oppose, to suffer; he is endowed with grit, with faith. This is the moral result of true worship."[1]

Worship is able to do all this because what worship should give, that worship at its best *is*. It should be in itself the realization of a man's true self, the realization of the life with God which is the fulness of life. If it is the objective of worship to create that life, it is part of worship's method to

[1]W. E. Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, p. 440.

create by making that life actually come to pass momentarily within its own experience. Worship at its highest is not merely the vision of the ideal; it is the experience of the ideal. Not merely the understanding of one's true self, but the living of one's true self. The experience of worship *is* the life we seek; it is the knowledge, for a moment or longer, of our destiny. It is not a reservoir to be tapped to supply the needs of ordinary life. It is a tuning-fork to strike the note to which all of life is to be keyed. We should go out from it not to revel in its memory but to recreate its substance. All the rest of life is the slow and tedious realization of that which in worship is already completely real.

3. *The way of commitment.*

Honest inquiry requires abstraction from the stream of life for analysis and interpretation. Worship likewise involves withdrawal for refreshment, perspective, reassurance. Each is valuable, but either may become dangerously deceptive. Life is a living, moving, throbbing thing. It is in the normal flow of life's central current that the power we seek is to be exercised. It is there largely that

it is to be found. Just here, intellectual speculation betrays us. We like to draw apart from the stream of life, sit meditatively on its bank, observe its swift current and then theorize about it. We defeat our own purpose. We can study life that way, but we cannot understand it. The fact that life is in ceaseless flow means that there is only one place from which we can sense it truly—from the center of its current.

To the majority of those marked by religion's resources, power has come not through deliberate search but largely unsought. In its truest experience religion is not something to be striven after and acquired; it is not something which you get, but something which gets you. The power we seek from religion is not won by straining after it and laying hold of it; it is a gift to those who enlist in religion's obvious tasks. The principal pathway to the resources of religion is commitment.

The logic of this truth is irrefutable. And it finds practical confirmation in the spiritual experience of the great Christians. But to many, especially those who feel themselves impotent for any significant accomplishment, it may sound ab-

stract, impractical. Let us see whether we can make its meaning more explicit.

Brooding over the fallible, faltering, petty life of this world is a Power which seeks to draw it on to what it might be—a Power which calls it both through the vision of its true destiny and through the immanent urge toward its realization. The goal is a far-off ideal which we dimly visage but clearly sense—the Kingdom of God. The method of its realization is the tedious toil of human effort wherever men sense the goal and give themselves to its fulfillment. The ways of aiding it forward are innumerable—through the portrayal of beauty, the service of need, prophetic proclamation of an ideal long before the day of its acceptance, the worthy interpretation of truth, or the simple ministry of comfort, relief, restoration. It is the true destiny of the world's life—this Purpose of God for the slow realization of a distant ideal. Now, the significant fact is that the route of its realization carries power at every point where a human life touches it with intention to help, laying the direction of its personal purpose in the course of the world's destiny.

Similarly, within each human life is a highest potentiality, its destiny. What that may be for anyone will vary greatly, its precise character largely determined by native equipment, early influences, special interests and aptitudes which have developed in its first twenty or so years. But, whatever its specific character in the individual, that potentiality lacks its maximum power, its maximum usefulness and its maximum happiness unless it finds realization and reenforcement in alliance with the main course of the world's progress.

That alliance may occur inadvertently as we release the noblest intuitions of our spirits and allow them to guide us into one or another aspect of the world's life; it is best that way. Or we may think it out. Then we achieve the power we seek for life as we recognize more fully God's purpose for the world, as we sense more accurately the specific character of our own truest life, and as we link the latter to the former at the points where they most nearly touch.

Put in another figure, to recognize the motif of one's own spirit; to discover its place in the harmony of the world's progress; fearlessly, steadily,

at whatever cost to attune one's purposes and practices to that harmony—that is to possess the maximum power available for life.

Recent psychology is bringing added confirmation to this principle. What life most requires for its fullest freedom and fruitfulness is an "integrating purpose"—a goal out beyond and ahead, in devotion to which the tangled threads of conflicting purpose are ordered, the disorganized emotions are unified, and the life can be drawn out beyond itself with strength which self-concern could never furnish.

While the ways of such harmonization are many—in research, in art, in constructive thought, in business, in useful endeavor—in this commonplace world most of us commonplace folk are likely to find it through work in some area of obvious need. All about us at every moment are tasks to be done, needs to be met, adventures to be dared. Some are exceedingly homely—the needs of a lonely life, of the postman and the bootblack and one's best friend. Some are exceedingly complex and commanding—maladjustment, corruption, stupidity, injustice in our corporate life. Each need

implies tasks. It is these tasks which are the Christian God's chief concern. As one shares his concern by participating actively in his tasks, one is most likely to enter into a certain and growing fellowship with him.

Then life takes on new meaning. The lights and shadows of human experience stand forth in bold relief. Insight increases. One understands why the seers and leaders of mankind have spoken so much of suffering and tragedy and frustration; why a Cross is the symbol of our religion. Slowly across one's consciousness comes the realization that one's life has found its full outreach. Into it and through it is flowing all the power of which it is healthily capable. The life-blood of religion is already coursing through and transforming life. "He finds himself in a Presence which claims him, renews his powers and then leads him out into all of life."

4. *The way of trust.*

One concludes a discussion of the resources of religion with a sense of failure.

In the end of the day the way to insight and power is so largely a matter of personal discovery. We must find it alone. Each man hews out the

pathway to God for himself. We are like woodsmen breaking convergent trails toward a common goal. The forest is dense, the underbrush thick. We know that we are following much the same course as our companions. We are pushing through the same underbrush. We are pressing down into the same ravines, up the same elevations beyond. And we are headed for the same objective. To right and left we can hear the axes of the comrades nearest us. From time to time, we catch a glimpse of a shirt, a head, an upraised arm. We exchange a shout of greeting and encouragement. But we do not see each other; each beats his own pathway to God.

But we may have failed also because we have not made clear the *sine qua non* of all the rest. This paper is concerned with simple principles of a common-sense variety. For many, back of them stands a greater need by far—not so much the improvement of the technique of power as a "lift" of the whole life which no instruction can direct, no argument produce. Some of us approach the question of resources with problems of a very definite kind—serious inner confusion, a complex web

of emotional strands which require untangling; it is possible that wise human guidance is the prerequisite to any increment of power. Many feel only the need for a bit of added strength, that "plus" which has been religion's familiar gift; it is for them that these suggestions are primarily intended. But some of us stand in a mood of impotence—disillusioned with life, self-distrustful, defeated by temptation. Our whole view of life or way of life is wrong. Our need is not for detailed suggestions but for radical readjustment. Nothing will help us greatly except a right-about-face, a wholly new temper of life and a great act of trust. Unless that occur, the other suggestions of this paper are irrelevant, tugging at our own bootstraps.

The capacity for such trust we have largely lost out of our modern life. We do not trust each other; we do not trust life; we do not trust God. We are afraid to give ourselves wholly to anything, afraid that we might have made a mistake. We want to know the conclusion of the story before we read the first chapter; we want to see the end of the path before we set out. "Life is

dominated by a persistent side-long anxiety about immediate effectiveness, servitude to an incalculable if not whimsical human flux." No wonder life is divided, ineffective, impotent!

The deeper experience of religion begins with just such trust. We do not discover God; we learn to trust and are discovered by God. That may be the way the power we seek for life will come.

It is difficult to define—the way of trust. It is even more difficult to direct another along it. It may become real suddenly; it may be a very gradual realization. It comes as our lives somehow are enabled to thrust themselves forth in a temper of confidence which they have never been able to manage before. It is the achievement of something all along dimly felt as possible, but never before experienced. This is religious faith. Increment of power may wait on increment of faith —faith which is compact of clearer vision of life's hidden realities, steadier courage to launch forth toward goals never fully achieved, and a great trust which eludes definition just because it is the ultimate destiny of life.

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